CANELO VS. GOLOVKIN PREVIEW

P.31

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Richard T. Slone

NOVEMBER 2017

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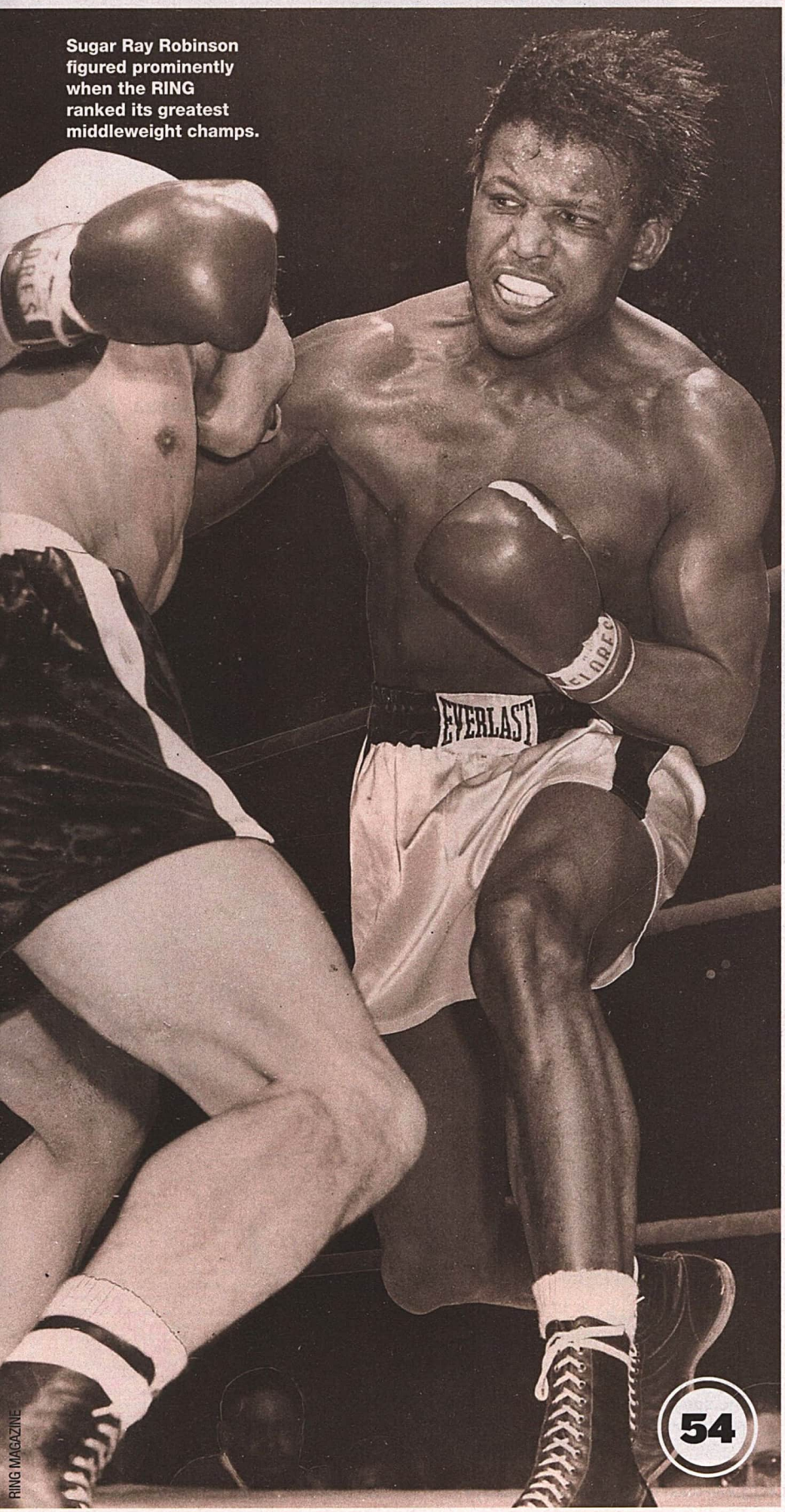

Sugar Ray Robinson figured prominently when the RING ranked its greatest middleweight champs.

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RING MAGAZINE

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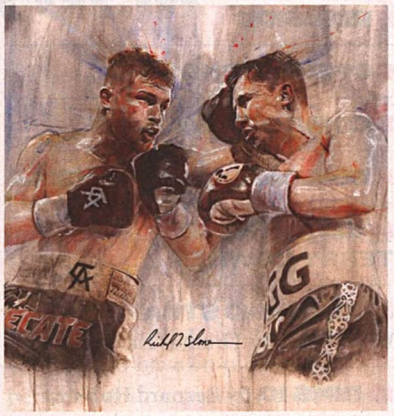

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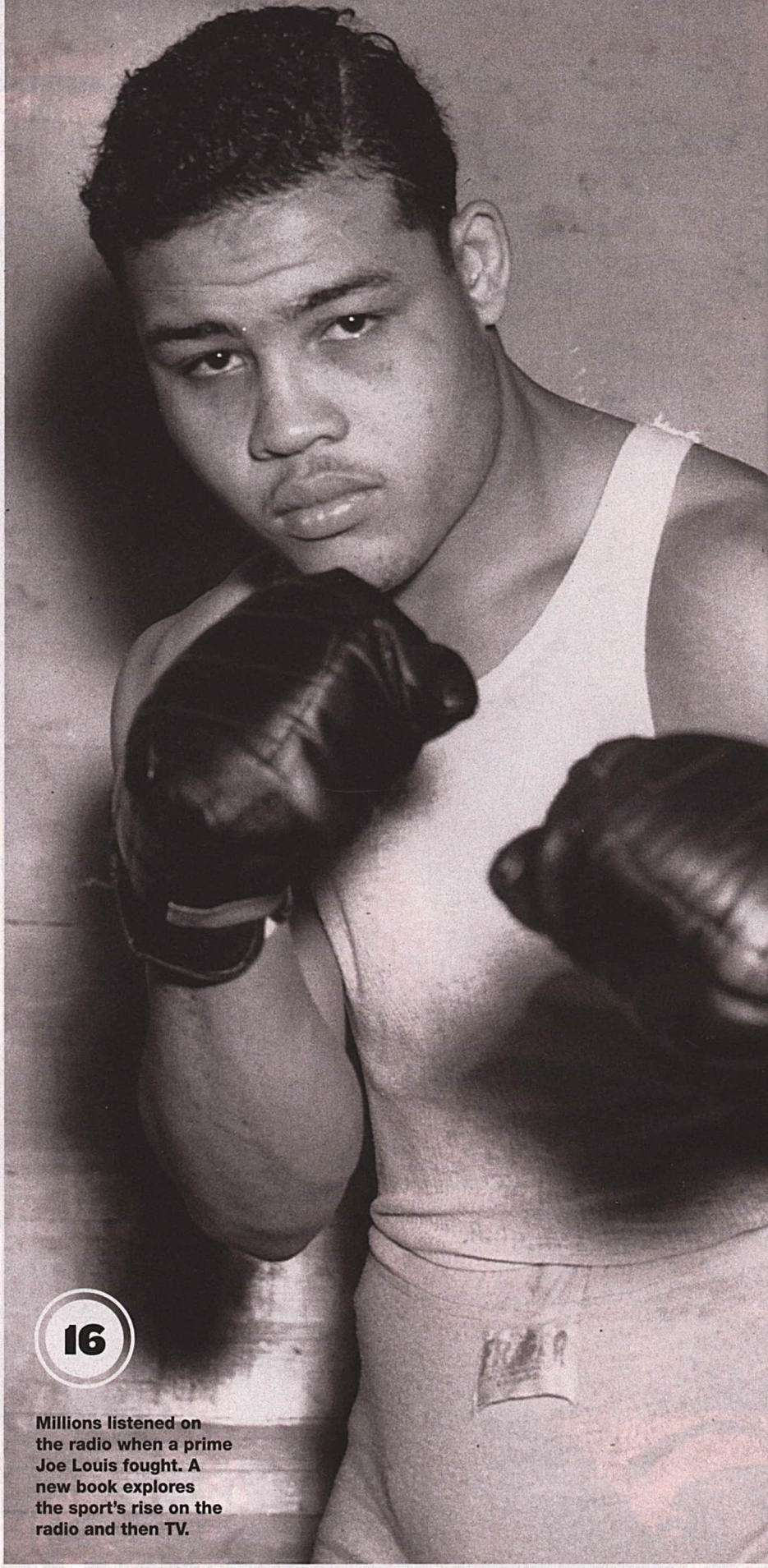

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Millions listened on the radio when a prime Joe Louis fought. A new book explores the sport's rise on the radio and then TV.

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A JOKE VS. A GEM

Two big boxing events are coming up. One (Floyd Mayweather Jr. vs. Conor McGregor) is a farce. The other (Canelo Alvarez vs. Gennady Golovkin) is among the best possible matchups in the sport.

The first fight pits an MMA fighter making his professional boxing debut against the best boxer of his era, an absurd matchup Nevada officials almost certainly wouldn't have approved if so much money weren't involved.

The second fight matches two of the best, most electrifying active boxers. It doesn't get much more intriguing than Canelo vs. GGG.

The first fight has some drama (if you want to call it that) but it will have been limited to the trappings, including the over-the-top promotional tour in July. The only question about the fight itself is how McGregor will lose.

The second fight is essentially a 50-50 proposition in light of Canelo's development and the perception that Golovkin is vulnerable after his disputed victory over Daniel Jacobs.

The first fight is a money grab, pure and simple. And that's not necessarily a knock on the fighters, promoters and others involved in the event. The vast majority of us would do the same thing if we could, competitiveness be damned.

The second fight will also do good business. The difference is the product.

The first fight is all hype, a shameless attempt to convince the paying public that it's a legitimate fight when everyone involved in the promotion – McGregor included – knows it isn't.

The second fight is real, as advertised.

The first fight was sullied by vile profanity on the promotional tour, particularly by racist and homophobic epithets hurled across a variety of stages as if the words have no meaning. Was that really necessary?

The second fight features two gentlemen. Boring? Perhaps. Maybe you have to have an old-school perspective to appreciate civility and good sportsmanship.

The first fight will allow Maywather to run his record to 50-0 – surpassing the magic 49-0 record with which the great Rocky Marciano retired – even though he's not facing an experienced boxer.

The second fight will determine the undisputed best middleweight in the world, as Canelo will be defending his RING championship and two of Golovkin's sanctioning-body titles will be on the line.

The first fight almost certainly will challenge the pay-per-view record of 4.6 million buys generated by the Mayweather-Manny Pacquiao fight.

The second fight will probably do in the neighborhood of 1.5 million pay-per-view buys. That figure will be deemed a success but it's a shame that a sham will triple the business of a wonderful matchup. Alas, supply and demand.

The first fight raises a question: What's the point? The answer: Because they can.

The second fight doesn't feature personalities comparable to the first fight, it can't compete with the level of hype and it won't break revenue records. It's simply the best boxing has to offer.

Isn't that what the sport should be selling?

Action fighter Miguel Berchelt (left) surprised many – including Takashi Miura – when he decided to box his way to victory on July 15.

COME OUT WRITING

DISGUSTED

I don't watch football, basketball, baseball, tennis or MMA. I watch boxing. I read boxing. I go to every fight that's close enough for me to get to and have for most of my 40 years. And whenever there is a big fight I receive a lot of calls from friends asking who will win, who should they bet on and why. I am disgusted with the number of calls I have received about the Floyd Mayweather-Conor McGregor fight. Floyd owes his life to boxing and he has used it to amass a fortune from its fans. Fantastic. That's one of the wonderful things about it. Someone born into extreme poverty can turn their lives into a positive. His fight with McGregor is greed. And he's smart enough to target the MMA fans who don't know any better. I suppose I can't knock him for it but it still really pisses me off that it's a sanctioned boxing match. I wrestled in high school and was pretty good. Did a lot of amateur boxing. Maybe Floyd will fight me next. Heck, we're the same age. He could market it as him giving an unknown a chance! Like Apollo and Rocky!

Robert Maye
Ephratah, New York

MMA REMATCH?

The so-called fight between Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Conor McGregor is a joke. I hope no one thinks McGregor has a chance to beat one of the best defensive fighters of all time in his first pro boxing match. If it was up to me, they would have two fights – a boxing match and then an MMA fight. Does anyone think Mayweather would do that? I don't think so.

Angelo C. Colella
Lynn, Massachusetts

ALL ABOUT 'MONEY'

I'm not surprised Floyd Mayweather chased the Conor McGregor showdown because, let's be honest, they call him 'Money' for a reason. But all those people who are saying that this fight is good for boxing are kidding themselves. This fight will have no trickle-down effect for the sport and will only serve to make huge amounts of money for those involved.

Mayweather-McGregor? Readers aren't enamored.

Owen Hollifield
Bargoed, Wales

JOSHUA, KLITSCHKO CLASSY

I am 85 years old and have been a boxing fan for many years. I remember as a young boy anxiously waiting to go to the local theater to see highlights of Joe Louis defending his title. I don't recall him ever berating another fighter, and I remember the dignified way he conducted himself after winning a bout. I watched the Wladimir Klitschko-Anthony Joshua bout on April 29. And seeing Joshua calmly walk back to his corner after the win and not making negative comments about his opponent during the post-fight interview brought back fond memories. Both he and Klitschko conducted themselves like gentlemen and showed respect for each other. Perhaps by today's standards I would be considered old-fashioned, but since the heavyweight division sets the standard for boxing, I would like to see some of that dignity return to the sport.

Najib Baha Amin
Baltimore

PACQUIAO ROBBED

To say that I am displeased with the outcome of the Manny Pacquiao-Jeff Horn fight would be an understatement. What was supposed to be a glorious night for boxing fans like myself – having a marquee fighter like Pacquiao fight on ESPN – was overshadowed by three inept judges who apparently don't have a clue on how to score a fight as Horn was awarded a gift decision. I couldn't believe what I had just witnessed, but to have the decision go unanimous for Horn is ridiculous. I had Pacquiao winning 117-111. One criteria for scoring a fight is effective aggression, which Horn didn't have as he was outlanded 182-92 in total punches. Yet the three judges – or should I say the three stooges – got it wrong, big time. The sport of boxing continues to hurt itself with horrible decisions like this.

John Dundon
St. Louis

REMATCH REQUIRED

I'm OK with the 115-113 cards from the two judges but I strongly endorse a rematch between Manny Pacquiao and Jeff Horn to resolve gnawing doubts and bitterness. Pacquiao will train and fight with crimson-blood tenacity next time because he will no longer have underrated Horn. He will be focused on avenging his defeat and regaining his honor. He did it in rematches with Erik Morales and Timothy Bradley, two other boxing icons I greatly respect.

Bonifacio H. Ayson
San Esteban, Ilocos Sur, Philippines

CORRECTION

THE RING had the wrong location of the Chuck Wepner-Andre the Giant mixed-sport fight in the August 2017 issue of the magazine. The event took place at Shea Stadium in New York.

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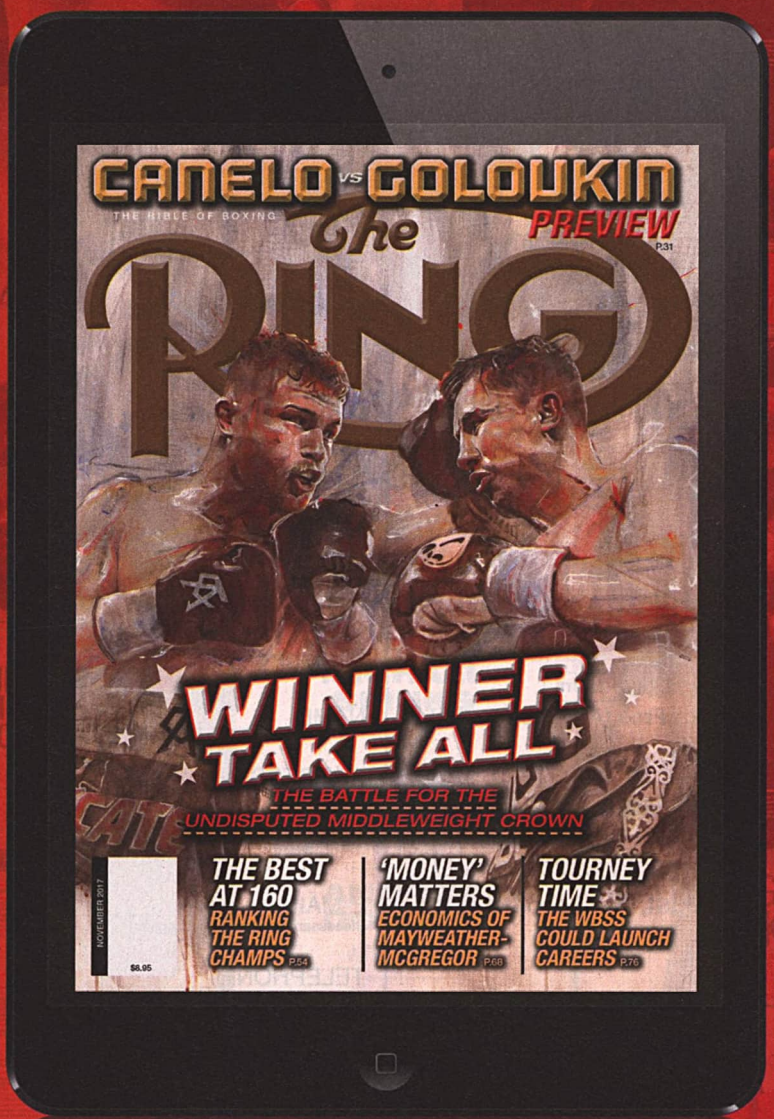

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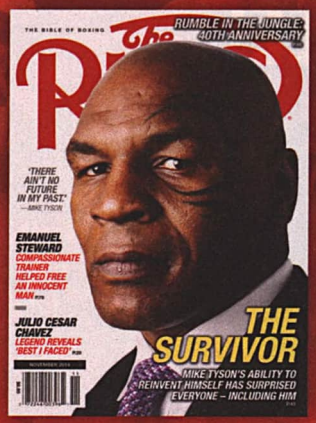

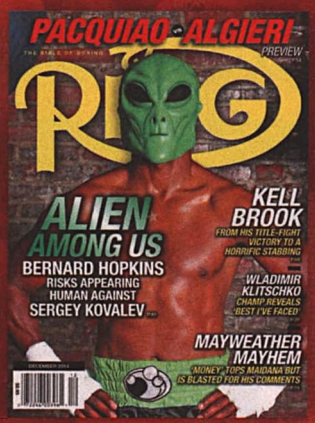

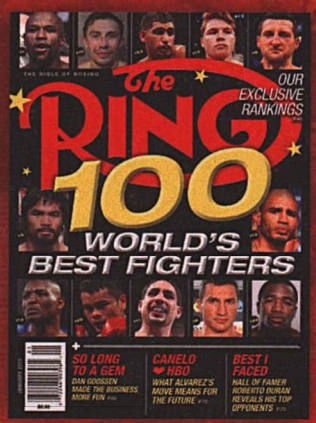

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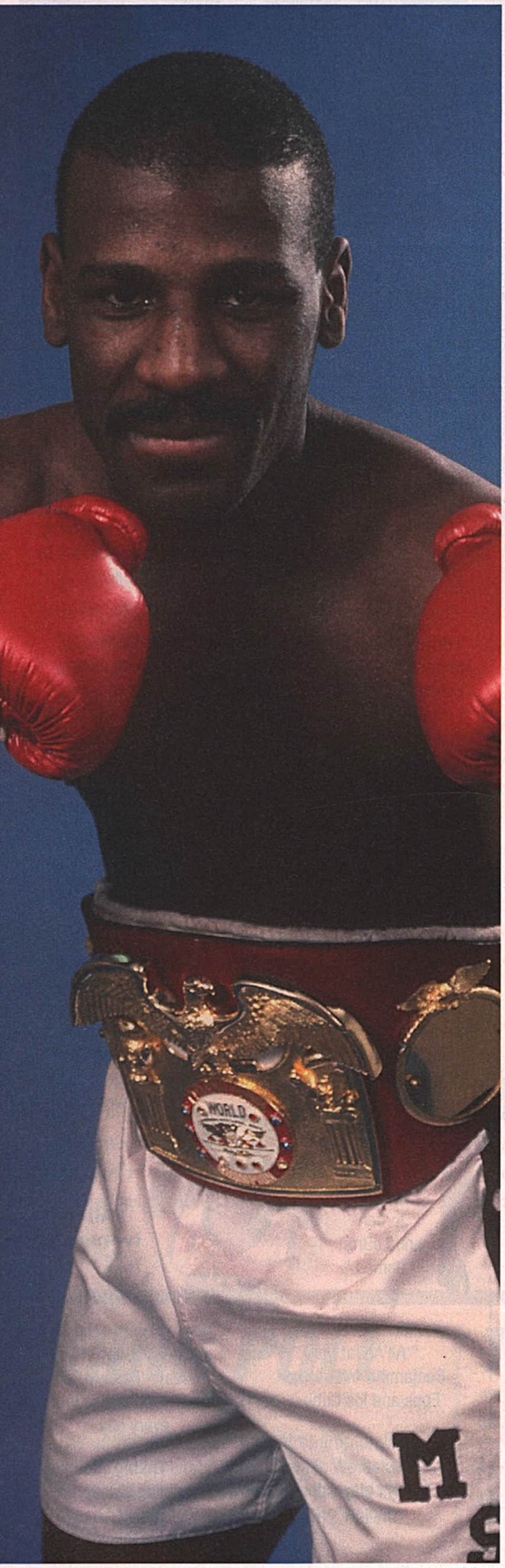
ADVANCED DEGREES



Degrees of separation between fighters of the past and their more contemporary counterparts. This month, regular contributor Gregg Morgan linked the only two Americans to have won Olympic gold medals and light heavyweight world titles, Michael Spinks and Andre Ward. Spinks won the middleweight gold in 1976; Ward was the Olympic light heavyweight champion in 2004.

MICHAEL SPINKS
fought

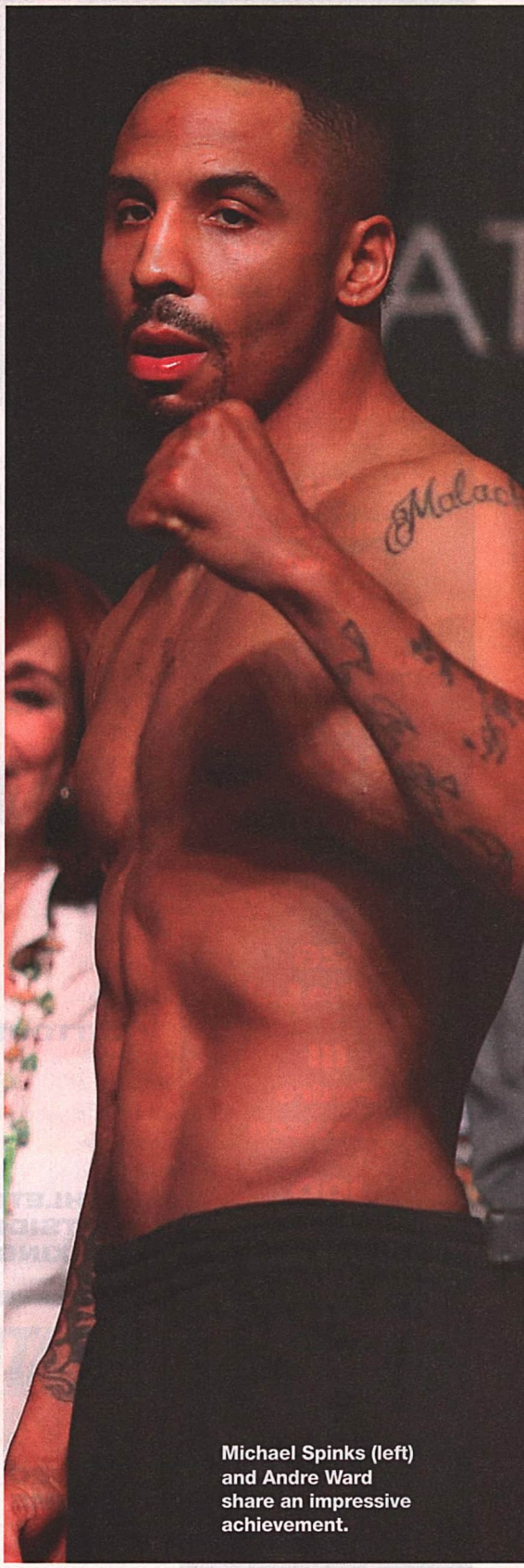
MIKE TYSON,
who fought

ANDREW GOLOTA,
who fought

TOMASZ ADAMEK,
who fought

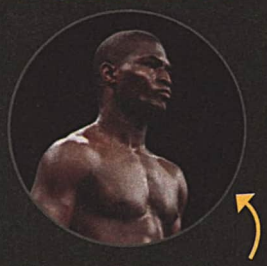
CHAD DAWSON,
who fought

ANDRE WARD



Michael Spinks (left) and Andre Ward share an impressive achievement.

A MONTHLY BOXING LIST



This month: Future Hall of Famer **James Toney** apparently finished his career with an unusual distinction: In 90 fights, he was never stopped. Here are 10 world titleholders who were never deemed unable to continue (in order of number of fights).

161 Panama Al Brown

153 Gorilla Jones

143 Kid Gavilan

140 Jimmy Goodrich

126 Duilio Loi

111 Pedro Carrasco

100 Santos Laciar

99 Carlos Monzon

90 Fidel LaBarba

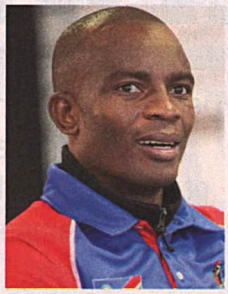
90 James Toney

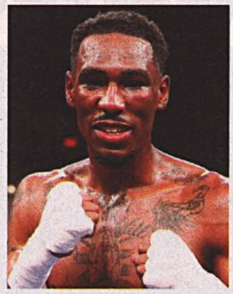
– Gregg Morgan

FIGHTERS' FAVORITES

WHAT BOXERS ARE INTO OUTSIDE THE SPORT

— Anson Wainwright





FIGHTER »	JULIUS INDONGO JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT TITLEHOLDER	ROBERT EASTER JR. LIGHTWEIGHT TITLEHOLDER	REGIS PROGRAIS JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT CONTENDER
MUSIC »	"Kwaito (South African music)"	"My favorite type of music is R&B. Artists I enjoy are Trey Songz, **Future**, old school like R. Kelly."	"Lil Wayne is my favorite rapper, and being from New Orleans I like bounce music. Of course, I have to mention my own song, the 'Rougarou' anthem by Benji Billion."
CAR »	"I drive a **BMW**."	"I drive an Audi Q7 SUV. My dream car is a Challenger Hellcat. I don't really care too much about foreign cars; I like the American muscle."	"I'm not into cars too much, but my dream car would be a monster truck."
FOOD »	"Seafood."	"I would say **chicken alfredo.**"	"I love seafood. Crabs, shrimp, fish, crawfish – you name it!"
TATTOOS »	"None."	"A lot of tattoos I got when I was young. I have a friend that passed away tattooed on my arm with wings around him, my nieces and nephews' names on my shoulders and my mom and dad's names on my collarbone."	"I have so many, but my favorite might be my New Orleans tattoo on my chest with the date of (Hurricane) Katrina over it."
ATHLETE OUTSIDE BOXING »	**"Usain Bolt."**	"Michael Jordan and LeBron James."	**"Allen Iverson."**
MOVIE »	"Any action movie."	"'All About the Benjamins' with Mike Epps and Ice Cube."	"I love all of the 'Friday' movies: 'Friday,' 'Next Friday,' 'Friday After Next.' I can watch them every day."
VIDEO GAME »	**"Chess game."**	"I don't play video games."	"I'm big into shooting games, so 'Call of Duty' has to be my favorite."

THE BEST AND WORST IN BOXING FROM THE PAST MONTH By Michael Rosenthal

GOOD

I thought Manny Pacquiao won eight of 12 rounds against **Jeff Horn** on June 17 in Australia, making the unanimous decision in favor of Horn an injustice in my book. And I know I'm not alone. That doesn't mean Horn didn't turn in an inspiring performance. I labeled the Brisbane boy a "no-hoper" going into the fight, which was the prevailing wisdom. We were all wrong. Horn was the bigger, stronger fighter and he took advantage of that fact, using rough tactics to make Pacquiao uncomfortable for much of a brutal, bloody – even ugly – battle. That was his best strategy. And no one can question his will. Pacquiao connected on a series of punishing blows in a one-sided ninth round and appeared to be within a punch or two of taking out Horn. The fit Aussie not only survived the onslaught but arguably got the better of Pacquiao the following round, an impressive display of resilience. Horn might or might not have won the fight – depending on your opinion – but we can all agree that he made a strong statement by giving a legend all he could handle. He is definitely a player in the welterweight division, at least for now.

BAD

I'm still scratching my head over the **Pacquiao-Horn** scorecards – especially one – and those who believe Horn deserved the decision. It seemed obvious to me that Pacquiao landed more and generally better punches than Horn, which is still the most important factor when scoring a fight. Horn was the more aggressive fighter but it wasn't "effective aggression," another key criterion in scoring. He landed an extremely small percentage of his punches compared to Pacquiao, at least to my eye. That's why I scored it 116-112 for Pacquiao. I won't begrudge others their opinions, though. I have great respect for many of those who thought the fight was close or that Horn deserved the decision. I don't have respect for Waleska Roldan of New York, the judge who scored the fight 117-111 – nine rounds to three – in favor of the Aussie. I haven't added anyone for some time to my Poor Judgment Club, dedicated to those who turn in unfathomable scorecards, but she definitely belongs. The 115-113 scores of the other two judges were bad enough. Roldan's score was so ludicrous that it damaged the sport.

WORSE

The scoring of Pacquiao-Horn was disturbing but we'll get over that. It will take longer to get over the image of the 38-year-old icon struggling as he did. The once-brilliant athlete seemed to fight in slow motion, at least relative to the dynamo who plowed through so many elite opponents not so long ago. **Pacman** seemed to get old – very old – overnight. To be fair, that might be attributed in part to circumstances beyond wear, tear and age. I wonder about Pacquiao's motivation for the fight. He must've seen Horn as a pushover, a mindset that doesn't light the necessary fire under a fighter. Horn's tactics probably took Pacquiao by surprise; I doubt he expected such a brutal fight, which included two cuts from accidental headbutts. I'm reaching, though. Pacquiao simply isn't Pacquiao any longer. Nothing short of serious injury is more gut-wrenching than watching our heroes deteriorate to such a state. And, sadly, it happens to almost all of them. Pacquiao would probably win a rematch with Horn but at what cost? His body has been through enough. The smart thing to do would be to walk away now.

RING POLL

A MONTHLY POLL OF OUR RINGTV.COM READERS

The undisputed middleweight championship will be at stake on September 16. We asked: **What will be the result of the Canelo Alvarez-Gennady Golovkin fight?** Here is how you responded.

THE PERCENTAGES

44.94	GGG BY KNOCKOUT
17.56	CANELO BY CLOSE DECISION
16.61	GGG BY CLOSE DECISION
9.18	CANELO BY KNOCKOUT
6.65	GGG BY WIDE DECISION
4.03	CANELO BY WIDE DECISION
1.03	DRAW

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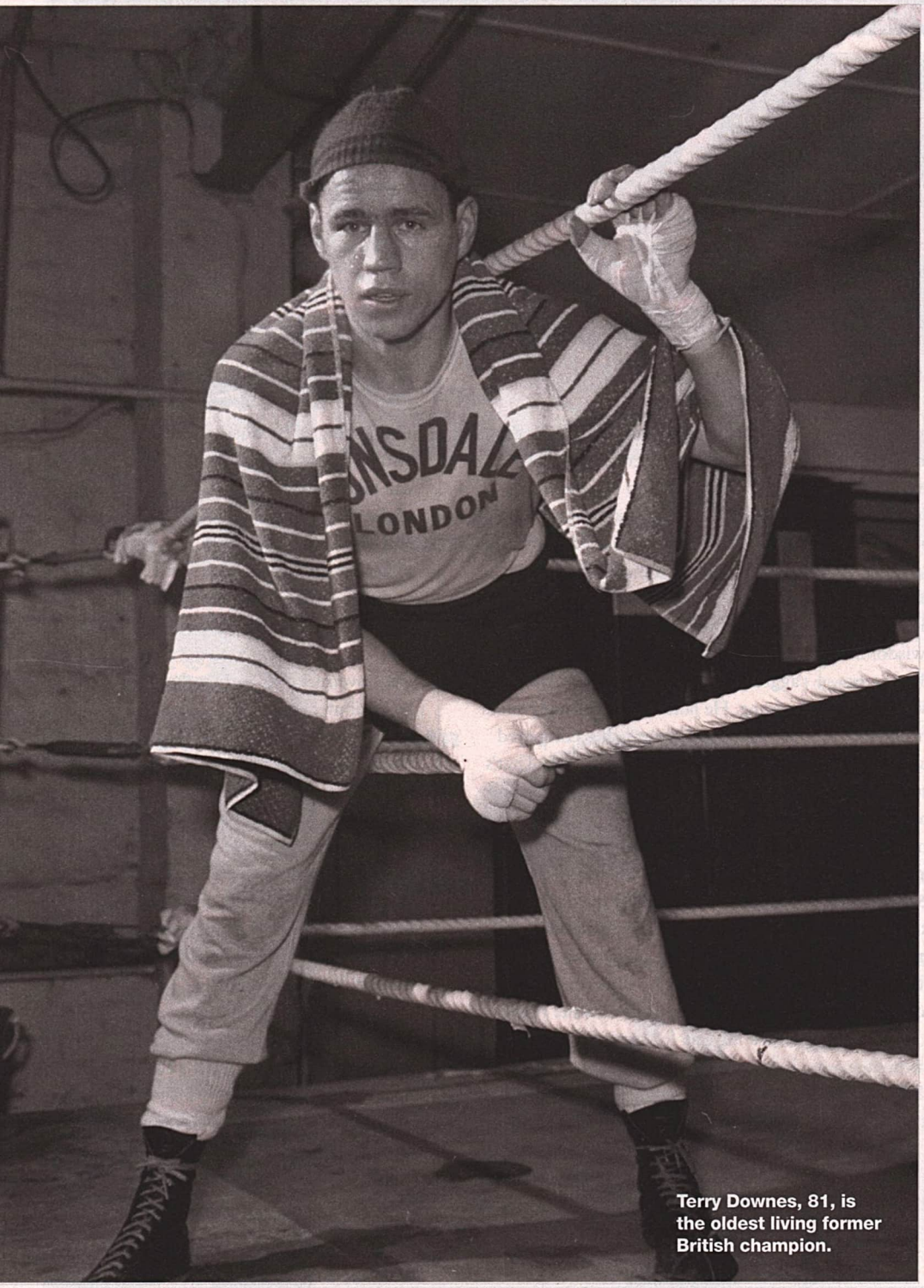


Terry Downes, 81, is the oldest living former British champion.

TERRY DOWNES

35-9 (28 KOs)

Terry Downes didn't have a long professional career but still managed to make a significant impact.

The London native, who fought from 1957 to 1964, was in the thick of the middleweight scene during the final years of Sugar Ray Robinson's career. Downes' greatest triumphs were his 10th-round knockout of Paul Pender in July 1961 to win the middleweight championship and a 10-round decision over a 41-year-old Robinson in September 1962.

In all, Downes fought seven times against five world titleholders, going 3-4 in those fights.

Downes grew up in London during World War II but his family moved to the United State when he was 16. He lived there for five years, during which time he spent three years in the U.S. Marines.

He had boxed in England before making the move but also fought as a serviceman. He estimated that he lost around four of 150 amateur fights.

"Out in the States, they were quite impressed by me," he said recently.

Downes returned to England after his discharge from the Marines, in January 1957, and promptly turned pro. Only three fights into his career, he was matched with a then-unknown fighter named Dick Tiger.

Tiger, a modest 20-8 at the time

SEE OUR RANKING OF THE RING MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPIONS ON PAGE 54

but loaded with latent talent, was too much for the young Brit, stopping him in five rounds. The U.K.-based Nigerian would go on to win championships at middleweight and light heavyweight and be inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

In his solemn changing room after the fight, the charismatic Downes was asked who he'd like to fight next. "The bastard who made this match," he quipped.

He bounced back with considerable success, winning the British title within 18 months and later the Commonwealth belt. He outpointed Joey Giardello, a future middleweight champion, in the fall of 1960 to earn a shot at reigning middleweight champion Pender.

The two met three times over the next 15 months, Pender retaining his belt on cuts in Boston, Downes stopping Pender in London in what he described as the proudest moment of his career, and Pender regaining his title on points in Boston.

Downes defeated Robinson in London but acknowledged: "I didn't beat Sugar Ray, I beat his ghost."

The Londoner made one more championship run at light heavyweight but was knocked out in 11 rounds by Willie Pastrano in November 1964 in Manchester, England. Downes (35-9, 28 knockouts) never fought again.

"He just caught me with a good punch and hurt me," Downes said. "I'd been pushing him around and chasing him for 11 rounds. He was a few pounds heavier than me at the time and I'd exhausted myself, and then he hit me with a good shot. I went down, but I wasn't knocked out. But they decided that was enough."

Downes built a betting shop (legal betting outlet) empire after his retirement from boxing, owning an estimated 30 shops before selling them off to the William Hill chain. He also appeared in several films, most notably "The Fearless Vampire Killers."

Downes, now 81, is the oldest surviving British world champion. He and wife Barbara have been married for close to 60 years.

He spoke to THE RING about the best he fought in 10 key categories.

BEST JAB

Sugar Ray Robinson: I suppose it could be Pender or Robinson; both were great boxers. The timing – they're reading you while you're standing in front of them, their movements drawing you into something. It's just part of the fight game. I would say Robinson.

BEST DEFENSE

Paul Pender: I've never thought about it. Pender was awkward; he'd grab hold of you. He was a very awkward bloke. He was … long, skinny. Very classy, but an awkward fighter. They used to call him "The Boston Crab." He used to grab hold of you whenever you got inside; he was renowned for it.

FASTEST HANDS

Robinson: He was such a great fighter. Great timing; timing's everything. He was just quick. He could probably drop something and catch it before it hit the floor. He had fast hands, fast everything.

BEST FOOTWORK

Willie Pastrano: I would say Pastrano. Pastrano was quick, but more body movements than handspeed. He was a natural mover. He developed it in a boxing way and it paid off. He was a natural fast mover.

BEST CHIN

Phil Edwards: I gave Phil Edwards some good shots over the period of 25 rounds and he took 'em all. Both fights were toe-to-toe. Edwards was a good, tough fighter. Giardello had a good chin. Phil Edwards had a good chin, because I hit him and he didn't go away.

SMARTEST

Robinson: How can you go against Sugar Ray Robinson and say someone was better than him? The man was amazing.

STRONGEST

Dick Tiger: Probably Dick Tiger. He was attacking all the time; it was hard to keep him off. You couldn't push him back.

BEST PUNCHER

Salah Ben Fahrat: I can't remember, it was that hard! (Laughs.) I fought a bloke at Leighton Baths, an African, he was just a sharp puncher. No one knew much about him and all of a sudden he hit me and I was on the floor. I was up and down two or three times. Every time he hit me, I went down. Gradually I fought my way back and stopped him in the fourth round.

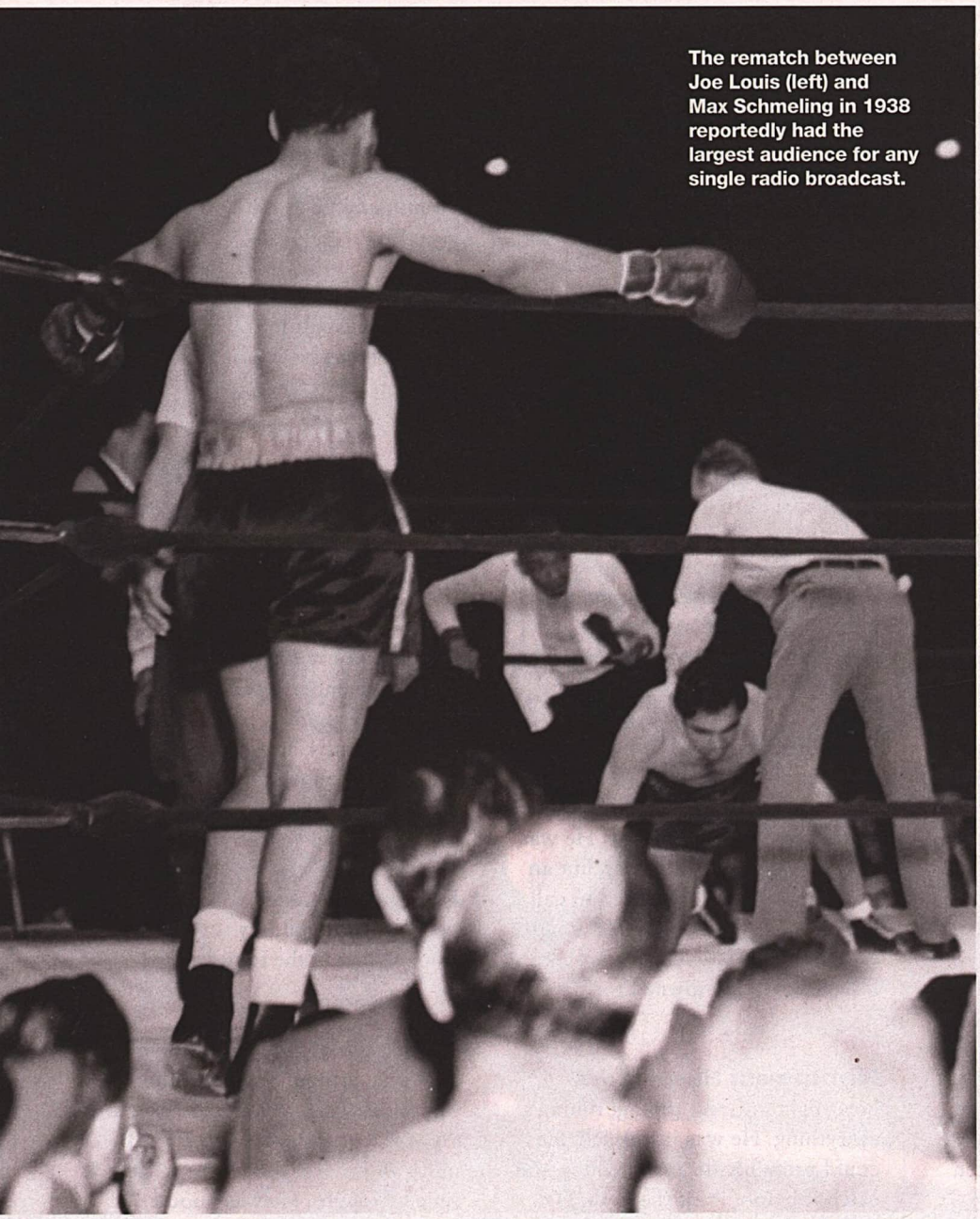
BEST SKILL SET

Robinson: You can't weigh up anything without putting Robinson top of the list. … That was the man. He was a great, great fighter and miles above everybody else in the time he fought. He was good at everything. You can't take anything away from him.

BEST OVERALL

Robinson: Because he had the ability. He could do everything better than anybody else. It was a mixture of everything. That's what makes a great fighter, and he had it all.

Questions and/or comments can be sent to Anson at elraincoat@live.co.uk and you can follow him on Twitter @AnsonWainwright



The rematch between Joe Louis (left) and Max Schmeling in 1938 reportedly had the largest audience for any single radio broadcast.

BROADCAST BOOM

NEW BOOK RECOUNTS THE RISE OF BOXING ON RADIO AND THEN TELEVISION

There was a time when boxing fans relied on newspapers for the most timely recounting of big fights. That changed in the 1920s with the mass commercialization of radio. Then, in the 1940s, television began the process of supplanting radio.

Frederick V. Romano tells the tale in "The Golden Age of Boxing on Radio and Television" (Carrel Books).

The first boxing match transmitted by radio was an experimental broadcast of the April 11, 1921, encounter between Johnny Dundee and Johnny Ray. Twelve weeks later, Jack Dempsey's July 2, 1921, championship defense against Georges Carpentier was heard by an estimated 300,000 listeners.

By the mid-1920s, radio had advanced from being a curiosity to a fixture in American homes. Fifteen million people heard Graham McNamee's call when Gene Tunney dethroned Dempsey on September 23, 1926, to seize the heavyweight crown.

The preeminent blow-by-blow commentators of the radio era were McNamee, Ted Husing, Clem McCarthy, Sam Taub and Don Dunphy.

Nat Fleischer, the founding editor of THE RING, took a turn behind the microphone for a May 7, 1926, bout between Sammy Baker and Larry Estridge at Madison Square Garden. But the broadcast did not go well. Stuart Hawkins, a boxing columnist for the New York Herald, described Fleischer's effort as "the most woefully inadequate, utterly colorless, and consistently exasperating broadcast that has ever disappointed eastern listeners."

The high point of the marriage between boxing and radio was Joe Louis' first-round knockout of Max Schmeling on June 22, 1938. NBC carried the bout on 146 stations throughout the United States, and it was transmitted in multiple languages around the world. McCarthy called the blow-by-blow

in what was arguably the most important sports broadcast of all time.

The golden age of boxing on radio, by Romano's reckoning, lasted into the twilight of Louis' heavyweight reign. By then, it was clear that television was the wave of the future.

Early boxing telecasts were primitive compared to what fans see today. Benny Leonard had boxed an exhibition on television in 1931. But as noted in the New York Herald Tribune, the picture quality was such that the fighters "seemed to be struggling through a severe blizzard."

The first major televised boxing match was a June 1, 1939, encounter at Yankee Stadium between Max Baer and Lou Nova. Here too, the grainy black-and-white images were far from satisfying.

The first heavyweight championship fight seen live on home television was the June 19, 1946, rematch between Joe Louis and Billy Conn. Romano calls that "the start of the modern era of boxing and commercial TV," but adds, "At this juncture, the live gate was still overwhelmingly the most important source of revenue."

The numbers support that contention. The live gate for boxing cards at Madison Square Garden in 1947 was $2.2 million combined. By comparison, the radio and television revenue streams for those fights were $220,000 and $100,000 respectively.

By the early 1950s, boxing was ubiquitous on television. Not only was it a national sport, it was the perfect sport for the tiny black-and-white TV screens of that era. The action was contested in a small enclosed area with only two competitors for the camera to follow and no hard-to-see balls flying through the air.

The Gillette Safety Razor Company took the lead in sponsoring boxing on television with weekly telecasts under the banner of "The Gillette Cavalcade of Sports."

Dunphy transitioned successfully from radio to television, where he was joined by Chris Schenkel as the preeminent TV blow-by-blow commentators of that era.

But the seeds of destruction were being sown. Other sports rose in popularity. TV technology advanced to accommodate them. United States Senate hearings chaired by Estes Kefauver lay bare the influence of organized crime on boxing. Then, on March 24, 1962, Benny Paret was beaten to death by Emile Griffith.

Boxing and tragedy walk hand in hand. In 1947, a national radio audience had listened as Sugar Ray Robinson bludgeoned Jimmy Doyle into unconsciousness. Doyle, age 22, was taken from the ring on a stretcher and died one day later. There had been similar tragedies in minor televised bouts. But Griffith-Paret was a major championship fight witnessed live by millions on national television.

Sponsors grew wary of the sweet science. In 1964, regularly scheduled national telecasts ended, marking the end of what Romano calls "boxing's golden age of television."

Romano deserves credit for having undertaken an enormous amount of research. His book contains an extensive recounting of the not-so-behind-the-scenes machinations of James Norris, the International Boxing Club, the mob-linked Managers Guild, Franky Carbo, Blinky Palermo and their brethren. There's also a recounting of the technology behind radio and television boxing broadcasts and an exploration of radio and television contractual arrangements.

On the downside, there are places where Romano's recounting goes on for too long, as if he's determined to include everything he learned rather than edit down. And the writing is a bit dry. Historic milestones like the Dempsey-Tunney and Louis-Schmeling fights are treated with little drama.

That said, "The Golden Age of Boxing on Radio and Television" is a valuable resource for those interested in the subject.

★ ★ ★

Three things you'll never read or hear:

1. Al Haymon signs contract for tell-all biography.
2. I'd like Al Haymon to come up to the podium and say a few words.
3. Al Haymon is hanging out in the media center.

★ ★ ★

Daniel Mendoza earned recognition as champion of England when he defeated Bill Warr in 1794. He's widely regarded as pugilism's first "scientific" boxer and was also boxing's first Jewish champion. He learned Hebrew as a boy, was bar mitzvahed at age 13 and is said to have been the first Jew with whom King George III ever spoke.

Mendoza authored both a personal memoir and a treatise on boxing. In each instance, the writing now seems dated. That's to be expected, since Mendoza's championship reign coincided with the presidency of George Washington.

But some thoughts are eternal. Thus, it's worth repeating one of Mendoza's observations: "A knowledge of the art of pugilism can never be acquired by theory alone."

Those of us who sit on the easy side of the ropes should remember that pearl of wisdom. RING

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book – "A Hard World: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing" – was published by the University of Arkansas Press. In 2004, the Boxing Writers Association of America honored Hauser with the Nat Fleischer Award for career excellence in boxing journalism.

Even if this had been ruled a knockdown, Jeff Horn still would've defeated Manny Pacquiao by a decision.

JUDGING THE SYSTEM

THE **HORN-PACQUIAO** SCORING IS JUST THE LATEST EXAMPLE OF A SERIOUS PROBLEM

This is one in a series of columns by future Hall of Famer Bernard Hopkins, who gives us his thoughts on various subjects important to every boxer and fan. This issue: poor judging.

I'm paranoid, and I'm not afraid to admit it. I don't trust anyone. I never have. That obviously includes boxing judges. I'm justifiably called the most paranoid person in boxing. I cared about two things going into fights: whupping somebody's butt and the judges not taking a fight away from me, like I felt they did to Manny Pacquiao when he fought Jeff Horn back in July.

I can relate to what Pacquiao went through. I believe when rounds are close, human qualities come into the equation. It comes down to what the judges believe about that fighter.

I remember going into my fight against Felix Trinidad, I was probably more paranoid than I ever was before a fight. The paranoia was highest for that fight. I knew the only way I was going to beat him was to stop him – and I did. My paranoia has always been my best defense. It kept my antennas up at all times.

As a fighter, young or old, you need to know who all of the players are. Weeks before a fight, you have the right to weigh in on a referee or a judge. These are the referee and judges the state commission picks. You have the right to say you don't like X, Y or Z as a referee or a judge. Now, that doesn't mean you're going to get your way. It often doesn't happen. But at least it's on the record as to you saying why you don't like a certain referee or a judge. I never trusted the judges.

My advice to any fighter is to know your business. Know who the judges are, who the referee is. It's everything. You have to keep track of that even more as you move up the ladder. You need to know the state driving handbook before you get your driver's permit, right? This is the same case. Some judges see fights a certain way.

We do live in a world of relationships. And regardless of what people say publicly, they always think of something subconsciously. I say that because before I fought Joe Calzaghe, I said, "I'd never let a white boy beat me," and there were two white judges; so go figure. Just like in court, a jury looks at reasonable doubt and motives. They're human. They have feelings and emotion. No one is a robot. Some judges can't remove their feelings from what they are actually seeing. If I was smarter back then for the Calzaghe fight, I would have said, "No one could beat me." Then there wouldn't have been that chance they were biased against me. I believe I beat Calzaghe, like I believe I beat Jermain Taylor the first time we fought.

How does a guy like Horn, who probably didn't win four rounds, win a unanimous decision in a 12-round fight? First, he's fighting in his home country, Australia, even though two of the judges were American and one was from Argentina. I do know one person who is happy – Horn's promoter.

What bothers me is after a controversial finish, you hear people say, "That's boxing." No it's not. In the NFL, in the NBA, in Major League Baseball, the referees and officials all huddle among each other and they'll review a tape or replay. And after conferring, then they make a decision. In boxing, it's an old system that needs to be modernized. Our sport is so far behind in 2017 when major fights aren't being judged properly. Maybe we start from the ground up, in four-round fights, to revamp the system. Maybe we need to have the judges confer or compare after a fight.

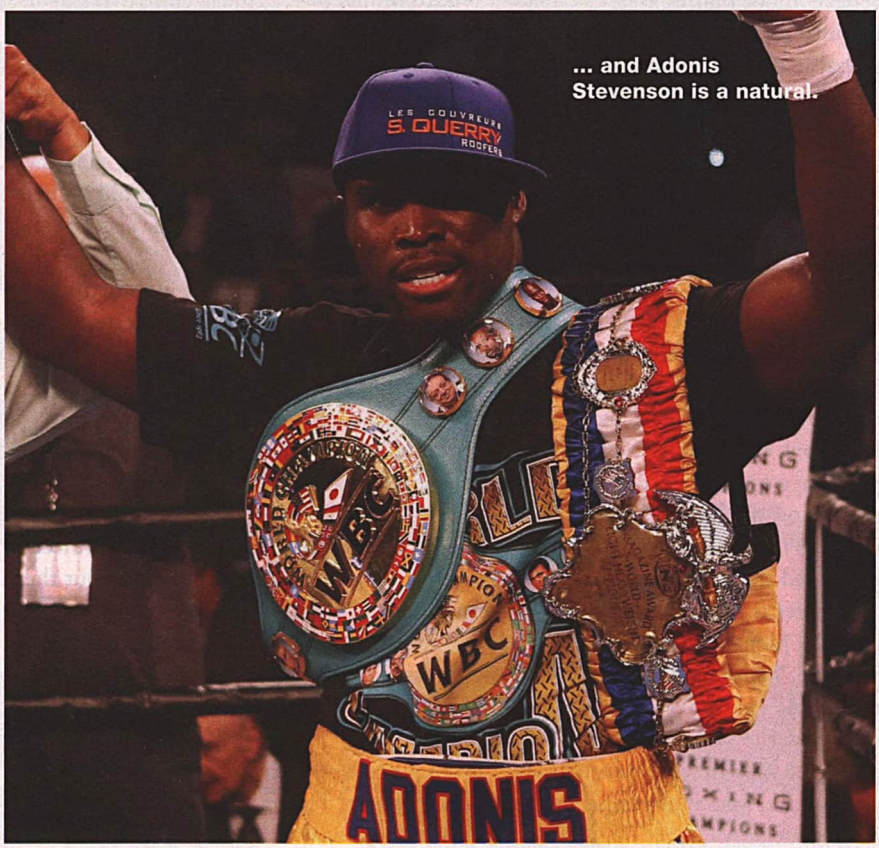
People think controversy helps boxing. It doesn't. It hurts the sport.

People asked me if I saw the Pacquiao fight and they said, "Well, you know, Bernard, that's boxing." What? A guy getting screwed over is boxing? There are still people out there who think the mob, like guys from the 1930s and 1950s, are still influencing judging and big fights. There's too much money involved and too much at stake today for that to happen.

Boxing needs to take a hard look at its judging system. The sport needs to step into the modern times. RING

A 175-pound showdown between Andre Ward ...

ANDRE WARD VS. ADONIS STEVENSON



... and Adonis Stevenson is a natural.

THREE EXPERTS – A FIGHTER, A TRAINER AND A MEDIA MEMBER – TELL YOU HOW A MYTHICAL MATCHUP WOULD PLAY OUT

Will opposites attack?

Andre Ward, the RING, IBF, WBA and WBO light heavyweight champion, is a god-fearing man, wholesome in every way, and an ambassador for the sport of boxing. Adonis Stevenson, the WBC titleholder, is a former pimp and ex-convict, Ward's complete antithesis.

At present, both champions are also opposites in terms of career trajectory. On June 17, Ward rubberstamped his pound-for-pound supremacy with an eighth-round stoppage of Sergey Kovalev in their eagerly anticipated rematch. Two weeks earlier, Stevenson knocked out Andrzej Fonfara in the second round of a meaningless return fight.

But while Ward is flying high and "Superman" Stevenson appears perpetually grounded, this fight remains high on the wish list.

There will be no Ward-Kovalev trilogy, so fight fans are eager to see the self-proclaimed "Son of God" tested by a new opponent. And while Stevenson has been avoiding the best fighters in the light heavyweight division for several years, he is still a big 175-pounder with lethal punching power.

Ward has hinted at a move up to cruiserweight and that could very well be in his future. However, a massive unification clash with Stevenson would be a money-spinning event that would doubtless eclipse anything that could possibly go down at 200 pounds.

THE RING spoke to three boxing luminaries to get their thoughts on what would be a new and exciting rivalry at 175 pounds.

TWITTER POLL: WHO WINS? WARD 87% ★ STEVENSON 13% ★ DRAW 0%

WARD ★ TALE OF THE TAPE ★ STEVENSON

175 POUNDS

WARD		STEVENSON
33	AGE	39
32-0 (16 KOS)	RECORD	29-1 (24 KOS)
50.0	KO PERCENTAGE	80.0
ORTHODOX	STANCE	SOUTHPAW
6 FEET (183 CM)	HEIGHT	5 FEET 11 INCHES (180 CM)
71 INCHES (180 CM)	REACH	77 INCHES (196 CM)

FIGHTER

TONY BELLEW
Former WBC cruiserweight titleholder

Style-wise, Andre is very good, and although he's not always pleasing on the eye, that's not what boxing's about. Boxing is about winning and getting the job done. I've went on record as saying that Andre is Bernard Hopkins 20 years younger. He won't get the credit he deserves until he's close to retiring. He's a brilliant fighter. People are talking shit about low blows (in the Kovalev rematch) but it's not a tickling contest, and Kovalev can't rely on the referee. Hit me low and I'll hit you back low. Don't get me wrong, I thought it was a terrible stoppage, but Kovalev was done. Stevenson, I still rate as the lineal light heavyweight champion because he beat Chad Dawson, who was the best at the time. I listen to what people say about Stevenson not facing top opposition right now and I agree. I think I'm the only credible win he's had since Dawson. I still rate him, though, and, with one punch, he hits harder than Kovalev. Pound-for-pound, he's one of the hardest punchers in the world, and you can't stop that left hand. The biggest shock Andre will get against Stevenson is his judgment of distance, and he's very hard to hit. If someone put a gun to my head, I'd pick Ward on points, but it's not an easy fight.

PREDICTION: Ward

TRAINER

NAAZIM RICHARDSON
Trainer of multiple titleholders

Before the first Kovalev fight, I told reporters and I told (trainer) Virgil (Hunter) that Ward would have to get off the canvas to win. The thing is, I knew Ward wouldn't have any trouble getting off the canvas. Kovalev's power is so shocking when you're first introduced to it, it's like, "Wow." It's like when a pretty girl walks in the room and you're like, "Wow, look at that dress." Some guys can get past that but some guys are google-eyed for the rest of the night. Ward has a calm demeanor and the gift of being able to adjust, so once he got past the shocking power, it was always going to go his way. Come the second fight it was worse, and if they fought a third time, it would be worse again. Stevenson is dangerous, but he's not even considered a champion right now. People consider Kovalev more of a champion. Stevenson is strong, and he must have the desire to get back in the conversation, but I just think Ward has too much boxing IQ. If Adonis lets Ward get into any kind of groove, then he'll embarrass Stevenson. If it becomes a chess game, there's no comparison in terms of levels. Right now, Andre is in charge of the game, and he has the potential to win by knockout.

PREDICTION: Ward

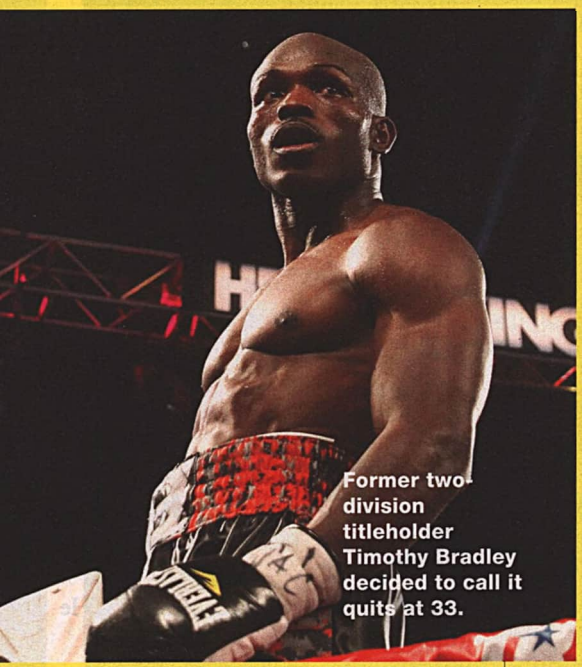
MEDIA

MIKE COPPINGER
THE RING Senior Writer

Ward is deceptively strong at 175. He imposed his will on Kovalev on the inside in both fights, and he's maybe the best inside fighter in the game. Ward can punch too, and we saw that right hand he landed on Kovalev (in the rematch) in Round 8. He's a tremendous body-puncher, and that's whether you think some of those shots were low or not. Ward is just a fantastic all-round fighter at 175, and he looks great. With Stevenson, I think he's underrated because he hasn't fought anyone for some time. When you watch him, though, in terms of the eye test, it's easy to see that he does a lot of things really well. He has excellent power in that left hand, and that's maybe the best left hand in boxing. Stevenson always has that punch, and he's a big guy who moves well. He can give you angles, he can fight going backward and he has a great jab. I don't think he's necessarily reluctant for the big fights; it's just that Al Haymon has been giving him massive paydays for taking on lower-level fighters. But if the Ward fight doesn't happen now and it is Stevenson's fault, then we can really hammer him. I wouldn't pick Stevenson to beat Ward, but I don't think it's a walk in the park.

PREDICTION: Ward

MOVING ON



Former two-division titleholder Timothy Bradley decided to call it quits at 33.

To everything there is a season, and July was apparently a time to retire.

Tim Bradley appeared set to turn the page in early August. With that, a 14-year career that garnered five titles in two divisions and saw Bradley inside the ropes for some of the most prominent prizefights of the 21st century will have come to a close.

Fans first saw Bradley's polished cranium (which was sometimes a weapon in its own right) on a wide scale when he beat **Junior Witter** for a 140-pound title on Showtime in 2008. A year later, the lifelong resident of Palm Springs, 23-0 at the time, would face Kendall Holt for the chance to acquire a second belt. Despite doing a Fosbury Flop after catching a left hook in Round 1, Bradley proved his fighting spirit by eventually winning a unanimous decision.

He proved it further by winning three consecutive defenses against undefeated fighters – **Lamont Peterson, Luis Abregu** and **Devon Alexander** – and capped his run at junior welterweight with a victory over **Joel Casamayor**. It was an impressive series by any measure.

But with all his achievements, as well as being among the friendliest guys in boxing, "Desert Storm" (a nickname he heard on a Fabolous CD) struggled to fully connect with fans and bizarrely even found himself cast unfairly as the villain sometimes. At no time was that more the case than when he fought **Manny Pacquiao** for the first time and won a highly controversial split decision. The result didn't just upset Pacquiao's fans, it *enraged* some to the point that they threatened Bradley's life. It was so bad that he said losing the rematch two years later was a relief.

In between those two fights he got himself into an uncharacteristic slugfest, in part because of frustration at being denied credit for the Pacquiao victory, with **Ruslan Provodnikov**. It was THE RING's 2013 Fight of the Year and Bradley won. And his next performance, a split decision over **Juan Manuel Marquez,** saw him at the peak of his powers. But the violence may have sown the seeds of his eventual retirement. After a close call against **Jessie Vargas** and an unsuccessful rubber match against Pacquiao, Bradley went fightless for nearly a year and a half before calling it a career.

Not that he'll be without a job. It turns out those ringside commentator headphones fit very nicely on that smooth head of his.

Robert Guerrero also announced his retirement following a third-round TKO loss against **Omar Figueroa** on July 15. It being his fifth loss in seven fights, suggestions to walk away had been floating around for a while, but there had been zero questioning of Guerrero's willingness to continue. Also one of the nicest guys in boxing, "The Ghost" brought it all with every outing and pounded his way to world titles at both 126 and 130 pounds. Starting in 2013, losses against **Floyd Mayweather Jr., Keith Thurman** and **Danny Garcia** began to highlight Guerrero's limitations, but entertainment value was never one of them.

And heavyweight champion **Tyson Fury** *sort of* announced his retirement; we still weren't sure at press time. He sent out a tweet on July 26 thanking whatever patient fans were still following his feed and concluded with "The End." As Fury promising something and Fury not saying anything are often the same in terms of results, we'll wait to see how this plays out.

In Culiacan, Mexico, the older brother of **Julio Cesar Chavez Sr.** was killed during a home-invasion robbery in late June. According to reports, two men broke into **Rafael Chavez's** house and demanded money, and when Chavez didn't produce enough for their liking they shot him in front of his family. Chavez the fighter promised in a tweet that "this murder will not go unpunished, I assure you."

Heavyweight **Eddie "The Animal" Lopez** was found dead in his room on July 14, cause unknown. A pro beginning in 1976, the highlight of Lopez's career came in 1980 when he fought to a draw with **Leon Spinks**. He continued until 1984, but the well-liked East Los Angeles native was involved with gangs and drugs and lived a rowdy life. He reportedly got into a street brawl a few days after the Spinks fight and KO'd a few of the responding cops before he was overwhelmed.

And here's hoping this is the last time you'll read this sentence: **Jermain Taylor** was arrested again. This time it was for allegedly biting a woman, who then pepper-sprayed him and tried to run away as he threatened to kill her. Taylor was later released.

TITLE BOXING

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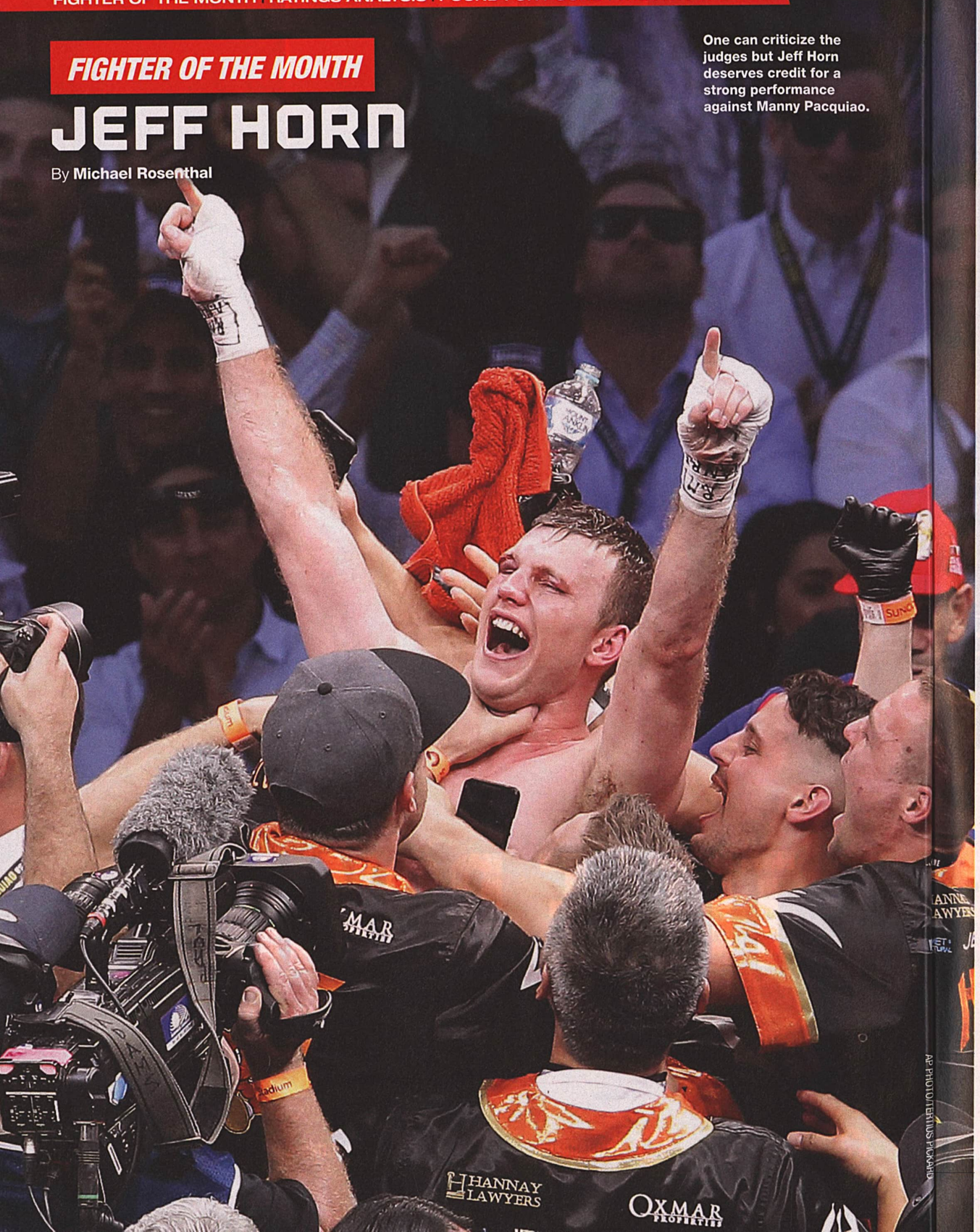
Pictured left to right: Damon Allen Jr., Jessie Vargas, Fernando Vargas

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH

JEFF HORN

By **Michael Rosenthal**



AP PHOTO/TERTIUS PICKARD

One can criticize the judges but Jeff Horn deserves credit for a strong performance against Manny Pacquiao.

Some people will take issue with the choice of Jeff Horn as Fighter of the Month given the controversial nature of his victory over Manny Pacquiao on July 2 in Brisbane, Australia.

Consider what he did, though.

The former schoolteacher was given almost no chance of beating the Filipino star yet, at the very least, made it a competitive fight. He employed precisely the correct strategy to give Pacquiao trouble; he roughed him up from beginning to end. And, although most people thought Pacquiao deserved the nod, Horn won a unanimous decision to take Pacquiao's WBO welterweight title.

The Aussie deserves credit for all of the above even if you disagree with the scorecards. He earned our respect.

Horn was also impressive in other ways.

No one would've been surprised had the relatively unknown boxer folded under the pressure of fighting before 50,000-plus in his hometown against a legend. We can all agree he fought with poise and confidence.

Horn obviously is a big, strong 147-pounder, one reason he was able to manhandle Pacquiao at times. That strength should serve him well going forward.

And he demonstrated that he was fit and resilient. The best evidence of that: He was almost knocked out in a brutal ninth round but managed to survive and bounce back quickly, outpointing Pacquiao over the final three rounds on two of the three cards.

That was as impressive as anything he has done in his career.

No one will use the word "great" to describe Horn's overall performance but he did what fans demand of boxers: He fought his heart out on a big stage. And, fortunately for him, he had his hand raised in the end.

Kudos to him. RING

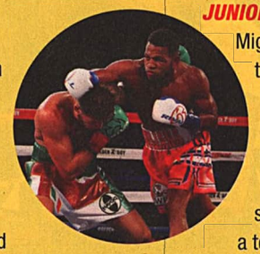
RATINGS ANALYSIS

POUND FOR POUND: No change.

HEAVYWEIGHTS: The rollercoaster finally came around again and deposited Alexander Povetkin, now on a strict drug-testing regimen, back in the ratings at No. 7 after he won a unanimous decision over Andriy Rudenko (unrated). The Russian's return pushed Jarrell Miller off the list.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No change.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: On the same night on opposite coasts, **Sullivan Barrera** (No. 8 last month) took care of No. 5 **Joe Smith Jr.** by a unanimous decision and Marcus Browne (No. 9 last month) stopped unrated Sean Monaghan in the second round. As a result, Barrera rose to No. 6, Browne climbed to No. 8 and Smith fell to the brink at No. 10.



SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: In his second fight at 168 pounds, Chris Eubank Jr. won nearly every round and took the No. 7 spot from Arthur Abraham, who dropped off the list after spending 405 weeks there.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Undefeated Argentine Brian Castano arrived at No. 9 after a narrow split-decision win over Michel Soro, who dropped from No. 7 to No. 10. Vanes Martirosyan (No. 10 last month) was dumped to make room.

WELTERWEIGHTS: What was criticized as a leisurely stroll to the bank for Manny Pacquiao (No. 4 last month) became what many saw as a robbery after Jeff Horn (unrated at the time) won a unanimous decision in Australia. Horn took the Filipino senator's belt and the No. 8 spot on the list while Pacquiao fell to No. 9.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Eduard Troyanovsky bounced back from his loss to No. 2-rated Julius Indongo in December and moved up a notch, from No. 7 to No. 6, with a fourth-round knockout of Michele Di Rocco (unrated). Then a potential star arrived at No. 9 as Josh Taylor (unrated last month) hammered Ohara Davies (also unrated) into seventh-round submission. A simultaneous shuffle raised Rances Barthelemy from No. 10 to No. 8, lowered Jack Catterall to No. 10 from No. 7 and ejected Sweden's Anthony Yigit (No. 9 last month).

LIGHTWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: Miguel Berchelt went from No. 4 to No. 2 after defending his title with a unanimous decision over Takashi Miura, who sank from No. 5 to No. 10. Those in between slipped a rank but since Jezreel Corrales, who won a technical decision over Robinson Castellanos (unrated) the same night, stayed put at No. 3, Orlando Salido (No. 2 last month) dropped an extra spot to No. 4. No. 10 Roman Martinez was then ousted after veteran Jhonny Gonzalez KO'd Jessie Cris Rosales (unrated) and moved into the bottom spot.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: No change.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: No change.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: Jerwin Ancajas climbed from No. 8 to No. 7 after successfully defending his title with a seventh-round stoppage of Teiru Kinoshita (unrated).

FLYWEIGHTS: McWilliams Arroyo (No. 5 last month) was removed for inactivity and the resulting adjustments made room for Japan's Masayuki Kuroda at No. 10.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: No change.

STRAWWEIGHTS: Yet another talented youngster from Japan, Hiroto Kyoguchi took Jose Argumedo's title with a competitive decision in his eighth pro fight. Kyoguchi left No. 8 and took the No. 4 position from Argumedo, who dropped to No. 5.

Chris Eubank Jr. (left) landed in the super middleweight Top 10 after a onesided victory over Arthur Abraham.

THE FIGURES UNDER THE FIGHTERS' NAMES INDICATE: WEEKS IN THE RATINGS • COUNTRY • RECORD

HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT UNLIMITED

C TYSON FURY
284 • U.K. • 25-0-0 (18 KOs)

1. ANTHONY JOSHUA
91 • U.K. • 19-0-0 (19 KOs)

2. DEONTAY WILDER
192 • U.S. • 38-0-0 (37 KOs)

3. WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO
636 • Ukraine • 64-5-0 (53 KOs)

4. KUBRAT PULEV
302 • Bulgaria • 25-1-0 (13 KOs)

5. LUIS ORTIZ
84 • Cuba • 27-0-0 (23 KOs)

6. JOSEPH PARKER
68 • New Zealand • 23-0-0 (18 KOs)

7. ALEXANDER POVETKIN
4 • Russia • 32-1-0 (23 KOs)

8. ANDY RUIZ JR.
60 • Mexico • 29-1-0 (19 KOs)

9. DILLIAN WHYTE
32 • U.K. • 20-1-0 (15 KOs)

10. DOMINIC BREAZEALE
22 • U.S. • 18-1-0 (16 KOs)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 200 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. OLEKSANDR USYK
95 • Ukraine • 12-0-0 (10 KOs)

2. MURAT GASSIEV
37 • Russia • 24-0-0 (17 KOs)

3. TONY BELLEW
62 • U.K. • 29-2-1 (19 KOs)

4. MAIRIS BRIEDIS
74 • Latvia • 22-0-0 (18 KOs)

5. DENIS LEBEDEV
391 • Russia • 30-2-0 (22 KOs)

6. KRZYSZTOF GLOWACKI
102 • Poland • 27-1-0 (17 KOs)

7. MARCO HUCK
281 • Germany • 40-4-1 (27 KOs)

8. FIRAT ARSLAN
247 • Germany • 40-8-2 (25 KOs)

9. ILUNGA MAKABU
211 • Congo • 20-2-0 (19 KOs)

10. KRZYSZTOF WLODARCZYK
10 • Poland • 53-3-1 (37 KOs)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 175 LBS

C ANDRE WARD
70 • U.S. • 32-0-0 (16 KOs)

1. ADONIS STEVENSON
216 • Canada • 29-1-0 (24 KOs)

2. SERGEY KOVALEV
236 • Russia • 30-2-1 (26 KOs)

3. ELEIDER ALVAREZ
176 • Colombia • 23-0-0 (11 KOs)

4. ARTUR BETERBIEV
137 • Russia • 11-0-0 (11 KOs)

5. OLEKSANDR GVOZDYK
36 • Ukraine • 13-0-0 (11 KOs)

6. SULLIVAN BARRERA
32 • Cuba • 20-1-0 (14 KOs)

7. NATHAN CLEVERLY
43 • U.K. • 30-3-0 (16 KOs)

8. MARCUS BROWNE
23 • U.S. • 20-0-0 (15 KOs)

9. DMITRY BIVOL
6 • Russia • 11-0-0 (9 KOs)

10. JOE SMITH JR.
58 • U.S. • 23-2-0 (19 KOs)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 168 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. JAMES DEGALE
216 • U.K. • 23-1-1 (14 KOs)

2. GILBERTO RAMIREZ
159 • Mexico • 35-0-0 (24 KOs)

3. GEORGE GROVES
294 • U.K. • 26-3-0 (19 KOs)

4. ANDRE DIRRELL
152 • U.S. • 26-2-0 (16 KOs)

5. CALLUM SMITH
112 • U.K. • 22-0-0 (17 KOs)

6. ANTHONY DIRRELL
154 • U.S. • 30-1-1 (24 KOs)

7. CHRIS EUBANK JR.
2 • U.K. • 25-1-0 (19 KOs)

8. TYRON ZEUGE
37 • Germany • 21-0-1 (11 KOs)

9. DAVID BENAVIDEZ
10 • U.S. • 18-0-0 (17 KOs)

10. JESSE HART
9 • U.S. • 22-0-0 (18 KOs)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 160 LBS

C CANELO ALVAREZ
88 • Mexico • 49-1-1 (34 KOs)

1. GENNADY GOLOVKIN
294 • Kaz. • 37-0-0 (33 KOs)

2. DANIEL JACOBS
137 • U.S. • 32-2-0 (29 KOs)

3. DAVID LEMIEUX
113 • Canada • 38-3-0 (33 KOs)

4. BILLY JOE SAUNDERS
139 • U.K. • 24-0-0 (12 KOs)

5. ANDY LEE
137 • Ireland • 35-3-1 (24 KOs)

6. AVTANDIL KHURTSIDZE
73 • Georgia • 33-2-2 (22 KOs)

7. HASSAN N'DAM
184 • Cameroon • 36-2-0 (21 KOs)

8. RYOTA MURATA
30 • Japan • 12-1-0 (9 KOs)

9. SERGIY DEREVYANCHENKO
16 • Ukraine • 10-0-0 (8 KOs)

10. IMMANUWEL ALEEM
7 • U.S. • 17-0-1 (10 KOs)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 154 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. ERISLANDY LARA
317 • Cuba • 24-2-2 (14 KOs)

2. JERMELL CHARLO
194 • U.S. • 29-0-0 (14 KOs)

3. MIGUEL COTTO
88 • P.R. • 40-5-0 (33 KOs)

4. DEMETRIUS ANDRADE
93 • U.S. • 24-0-0 (16 KOs)

5. AUSTIN TROUT
268 • U.S. • 30-3-0 (17 KOs)

6. JARRETT HURD
37 • U.S. • 20-0-0 (14 KOs)

7. LIAM SMITH
98 • U.K. • 25-1-1 (14 KOs)

8. ERICKSON LUBIN
21 • U.S. • 18-0-0 (13 KOs)

9. BRIAN CASTANO
4 • Argentina • 14-0-0 (10 KOs)

10. MICHEL SORO
32 • France • 30-2-1 (20 KOs)

WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 147 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. KEITH THURMAN
229 • U.S. • 28-0-0 (22 KOs)

2. ERROL SPENCE
95 • U.S. • 22-0-0 (19 KOs)

3. SHAWN PORTER
190 • U.S. • 27-2-1 (17 KOs)

4. KELL BROOK
327 • U.K. • 36-2-0 (25 KOs)

5. DANNY GARCIA
104 • U.S. • 33-1-0 (19 KOs)

6. LAMONT PETERSON
23 • U.S. • 35-3-1 (17 KOs)

7. LUCAS MATTHYSSE
8 • Argentina • 38-4-0 (35 KOs)

8. JEFF HORN
4 • Australia • 17-0-1 (11 KOs)

9. MANNY PACQUIAO
38 • Phil. • 59-7-2 (38 KOs)

10. JESSIE VARGAS
73 • U.S. • 27-2-0 (10 KOs)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 140 LBS

C TERENCE CRAWFORD
119 • U.S. • 31-0-0 (22 KOs)

1. VIKTOR POSTOL
206 • Ukraine • 28-1-0 (12 KOs)

2. JULIUS INDONGO
34 • Namibia • 22-0-0 (11 KOs)

3. ANTONIO OROZCO
95 • U.S. • 26-0-0 (17 KOs)

4. REGIS PROGRAIS
53 • U.S. • 20-0-0 (17 KOs)

5. ADRIAN GRANADOS
73 • U.S. • 18-5-2 (12 KOs)

6. EDUARD TROYANOVSKY
87 • Russia • 26-1-0 (23 KOs)

7. SERGEY LIPINETS
33 • Russia • 12-0-0 (10 KOs)

8. RANCES BARTHELEMY
10 • Cuba • 26-0-0 (13 KOs)

9. JOSH TAYLOR
3 • U.K. • 10-0-0 (9 KOs)

10. JACK CATTERALL
70 • U.K. • 18-0-0 (10 KOs)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 135 LBS

C JORGE LINARES
177 • Venezuela • 42-3-0 (27 KOs)

1. MIKEY GARCIA
26 • U.S. • 36-0-0 (30 KOs)

2. TERRY FLANAGAN
94 • U.K. • 33-0-0 (13 KOs)

3. ROBERT EASTER
69 • U.S. • 20-0-0 (14 KOs)

4. DENIS SHAFIKOV
120 • Russia • 38-3-1 (20 KOs)

5. SHARIF BOGERE
143 • Uganda • 29-1-0 (20 KOs)

6. RICHARD COMMEY
113 • Ghana • 25-2-0 (22 KOs)

7. FELIX VERDEJO
37 • Puerto Rico • 23-0-0 (15 KOs)

8. RAYMUNDO BELTRAN
16 • Mexico • 33-7-1 (21 KOs)

9. ANTHONY CROLLA
92 • U.K. • 31-6-3 (13 KOs)

10. DEJAN ZLATICANIN
120 • Montenegro • 22-1-0 (15 KOs)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 130 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. VASYL LOMACHENKO
59 • Ukraine • 8-1-0 (6 KOs)

2. MIGUEL BERCHELT
26 • Mexico • 32-1-0 (28 KOs)

3. JEZREEL CORRALES
65 • Panama • 22-1-0 (8 KOs)

4. ORLANDO SALIDO
149 • Mexico • 44-13-4 (31 KOs)

5. GERVONTA DAVIS
28 • U.S. • 18-0-0 (17 KOs)

6. TAKASHI UCHIYAMA
395 • Japan • 24-2-1 (20 KOs)

7. FRANCISCO VARGAS
159 • Mexico • 23-1-2 (17 KOs)

8. TEVIN FARMER
16 • U.S. • 25-4-1 (5 KOs)

9. TAKASHI MIURA
225 • Japan • 31-4-2 (24 KOs)

10. JHONNY GONZALEZ
1 • Mexico • 64-10-0 (54 KOs)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 126 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. LEO SANTA CRUZ
100 • U.S. • 33-1-1 (18 KOs)

2. GARY RUSSELL JR.
122 • U.S. • 28-1-0 (17 KOs)

3. CARL FRAMPTON
52 • U.K. • 23-1-0 (14 KOs)

4. LEE SELBY
176 • U.K. • 25-1-0 (9 KOs)

5. ABNER MARES
221 • Mexico • 30-2-1 (15 KOs)

6. OSCAR VALDEZ
68 • Mexico • 22-0-0 (19 KOs)

7. JOSEPH DIAZ JR.
70 • U.S. • 24-0-0 (13 KOs)

8. SIMPIWE VETYEKA
190 • S. Africa • 29-3-0 (17 KOs)

9. JESUS CUELLAR
146 • Argentina • 28-2-0 (21 KOs)

10. JORGE LARA
42 • Mexico • 29-0-2 (21 KOs)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 122 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
351 • Cuba • 17-0-0 (11 KOs)

2. JESSIE MAGDALENO
111 • U.S. • 25-0-0 (18 KOs)

3. REY VARGAS
137 • Mexico • 29-0-0 (22 KOs)

4. NONITO DONAIRE
122 • Phil. • 37-4-0 (24 KOs)

5. MOISES FLORES
55 • Mexico • 25-0-0 (17 KOs)

6. DIEGO DE LA HOYA
52 • Mexico • 19-0-0 (9 KOs)

7. HUGO RUIZ
33 • Mexico • 36-4-0 (32 KOs)

8. YUKINORI OGUNI
30 • Japan • 19-1-1 (7 KOs)

9. SHUN KUBO
16 • Japan • 12-0-0 (9 KOs)

10. JULIO CEJA
9 • Mexico • 31-2-0 (28 KOs)

HOW OUR RATINGS ARE COMPILED

Championship vacancies can be filled in the following two ways: 1. THE RING's Nos. 1 and 2 contenders fight one another. 2. If the Nos. 1 and 2 contenders choose not to fight one another and No. 1 fights No. 3, that matchup could be for the RING title if the Editorial Board deems No. 3 worthy.

A champion can lose his belt in six situations: 1. The Champion loses a fight in the weight class in which he is champion; 2. The Champion moves to another weight class; 3. The Champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months, although injuries and certain other unforeseen circumstances could be taken into consideration; 4. The Champion does not schedule a fight at his champion weight for 18 months (even if he fights at another weight); 5. The Champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-5 contender from any weight class for two years; 6. The Champion retires.

THE RING Editorial Board considers input from the Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world and then decides collectively what changes will be made. That applies to both the pound-for-pound and divisional ratings.

Records provided by boxrec.com

RING RATINGS

BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 118 LBS

C SHINSUKE YAMANAKA
299 • Japan • 27-0-2 (19 KOs)

1. JAMIE MCDONNELL
221 • U.K. • 29-2-1 (13 KOs)

2. JUAN CARLOS PAYANO
148 • Dom. Rep. • 18-1-0 (9 KOs)

3. ZHANAT ZHAKIYANOV
24 • Kaz. • 27-1-0 (18 KOs)

4. ZOLANI TETE
72 • S. Africa • 25-3-0 (20 KOs)

5. RAU'SHEE WARREN
57 • U.S. • 14-2-0 (4 KOs)

6. RYAN BURNETT
7 • U.K. • 17-0-0 (9 KOs)

7. LUIS NERY
52 • Mexico • 23-0-0 (17 KOs)

8. LIBORIO SOLIS
20 • Venezuela • 25-5-1 (11 KOs)

9. LEE HASKINS
111 • U.K. • 34-4-0 (14 KOs)

10. EMMANUEL RODRIGUEZ
14 • P.R. • 16-0-0 (11 KOs)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 115 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. NAOYA INOUE
134 • Japan • 13-0-0 (11 KOs)

2. WISAKSIL WANGEK
221 • Thailand • 43-4-1 (39 KOs)

3. ROMAN GONZALEZ
46 • Nicaragua • 46-1-0 (38 KOs)

4. CARLOS CUADRAS
270 • Mexico • 36-1-1 (27 KOs)

5. JUAN FRANCISCO ESTRADA
42 • Mexico • 35-2-0 (25 KOs)

6. KHALID YAFAI
72 • U.K. • 22-0-0 (14 KOs)

7. JERWIN ANCAJAS
47 • Phil. • 27-1-1 (18 KOs)

8. LUIS CONCEPCION
97 • Panama • 36-5-0 (25 KOs)

9. MCJOE ARROYO
163 • P.R. • 17-1-0 (8 KOs)

10. KOHEI KONO
93 • Japan • 33-10-1 (14 KOs)

FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 112 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. KAZUTO IOKA
150 • Japan • 22-1-0 (13 KOs)

2. DONNIE NIETES
44 • Phil. • 40-1-4 (22 KOs)

3. DAIGO HIGA
43 • Japan • 13-0-0 (13 KOs)

4. JUAN CARLOS REVECO
304 • Argentina • 38-3-0 (19 KOs)

5. ZOU SHIMING
38 • China • 9-1-0 (2 KOs)

6. VINCENT LEGRAND
24 • France • 24-0-0 (14 KOs)

7. MORUTI MTHALANE
13 • S. Africa • 33-2-0 (22 KOs)

8. ANDREW SELBY
8 • U.K. • 9-0-0 (5 KOs)

9. FRANCISCO RODRIGUEZ JR.
6 • Mexico • 23-4-1 (15 KOs)

10. MASAYUKI KURODA
1 • Japan • 27-7-3 (15 KOs)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 108 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. PEDRO GUEVARA
226 • Mexico • 30-2-1 (17 KOs)

2. KOSEI TANAKA
30 • Japan • 9-0-0 (5 KOs)

3. RYOICHI TAGUCHI
137 • Japan • 26-2-2 (12 KOs)

4. MILAN MELINDO
141 • Phil. • 36-2-0 (13 KOs)

5. CARLOS CANIZALES
29 • Venezuela • 17-0-1 (14 KOs)

6. KEN SHIRO
35 • Japan • 10-0-0 (5 KOs)

7. GANIGAN LOPEZ
73 • Mexico • 28-7-0 (17 KOs)

8. RANDY PETALCORIN
168 • Phil. • 26-2-1 (19 KOs)

9. HEKKIE BUDLER
40 • S. Africa • 31-2-0 (10 KOs)

10. AKIRA YAEGASHI
82 • Japan • 25-6-0 (13 KOs)

STRAWWEIGHTS
WEIGHT LIMIT: 105 LBS

C (VACANT)

1. CHAYAPHON MOONSRI
319 • Thailand • 47-0-0 (17 KOs)

2. THAMMANOON NIYOMTRONG
147 • Thailand • 16-0-0 (7 KOs)

3. BYRON ROJAS
71 • Nicaragua • 20-3-3 (9 KOs)

4. HIROTO KYOGUCHI
15 • Japan • 8-0-0 (6 KOs)

5. JOSE ARGUMEDO
82 • Mexico • 20-4-1 (12 KOs)

6. CARLOS BUITRAGO
250 • Nicaragua • 30-2-1 (17 KOs)

7. SIMPHIWE KHONCO
40 • S. Africa • 18-5-0 (7 KOs)

8. RYUYA YAMANAKA
37 • Japan • 14-2-0 (4 KOs)

9. TATSUYA FUKUHARA
12 • Japan • 19-4-6 (7 KOs)

10. LEROY ESTRADA
9 • Panama • 16-2-0 (6 KOs)

POUND FOR POUND

1. ANDRE WARD
98 • U.S. • 32-0-0 (16 KOs)

2. GENNADY GOLOVKIN
128 • Kazakhstan • 37-0-0 (33 KOs)

3. ROMAN GONZALEZ
164 • Nicaragua • 46-1-0 (38 KOs)

4. TERENCE CRAWFORD
117 • U.S. • 31-0-0 (22 KOs)

5. VASYL LOMACHENKO
58 • Ukraine • 8-1-0 (6 KOs)

6. GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
205 • Cuba • 17-0-0 (11 KOs)

7. SERGEY KOVALEV
124 • Russia • 30-2-1 (26 KOs)

8. CANELO ALVAREZ
88 • Mexico • 49-1-1 (34 KOs)

9. SHINSUKE YAMANAKA
115 • Japan • 27-0-2 (19 KOs)

10. NAOYA INOUE
26 • Japan • 13-0-0 (11 KOs)

THE RING POLICY ON RATED BOXERS WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS

THE RING will remove from its ratings any rated boxer — including a champion — if such boxer at some point undergoes drug testing (Olympic-style or otherwise) and that boxer tests positive for a performance-enhancing drug.

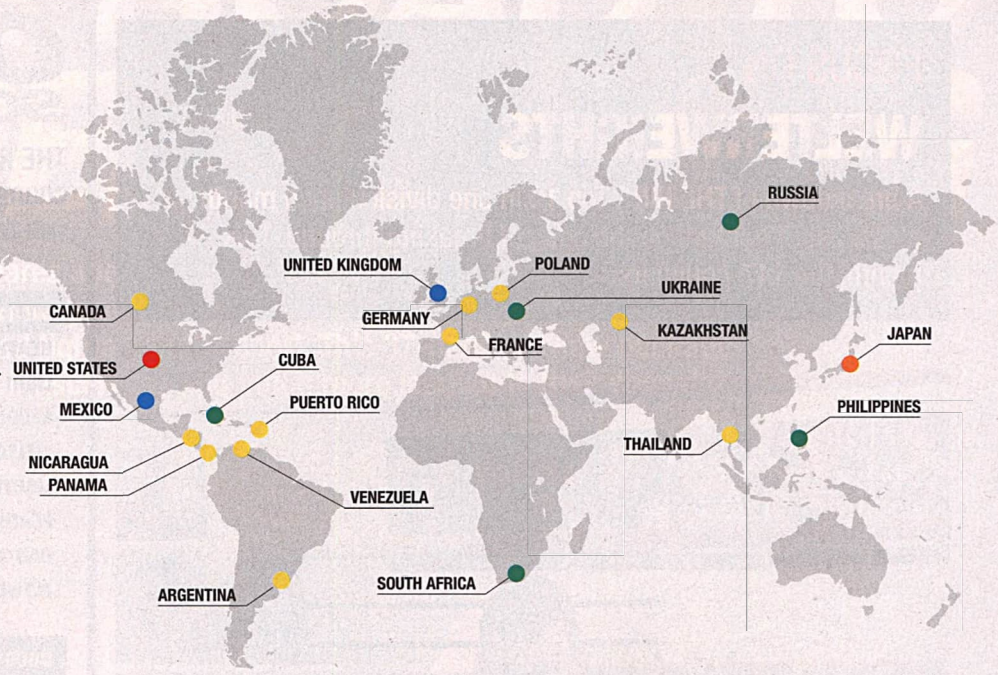
In the event that a boxer has undergone testing in which the boxer provides two samples ("A" and "B") and the boxer's "A" and subsequent "B" samples test positive for a performance-enhancing drug or if his "A" sample tests positive and he waives his right to have the "B" sample tested, then the boxer shall immediately be removed from the ratings.

A boxer whose "A" sample tested positive and is awaiting the results of his "B" sample will not be allowed to fight for a championship or rise in the ratings.

A boxer who is removed because of a positive test will have the opportunity to earn his way back into the ratings after any suspension period is completed.

A boxer who is dropped also may be reinstated if the testing agency subsequently reverses its decision or a court of competent jurisdiction finds that the test result was invalid.

RATED FIGHTERS BY COUNTRY



30 OR MORE · 20 - 29 · 10 - 19 · 5 - 9 · 2 - 4

UNITED STATES	35	▼ 3
MEXICO	23	▲ 1
UNITED KINGDOM	23	▲ 2
JAPAN	18	▲ 1
RUSSIA	9	▲ 1
PHILIPPINES	6	
UKRAINE	6	
CUBA	5	
SOUTH AFRICA	5	
ARGENTINA	4	▲ 1
PUERTO RICO	4	▼ 2
GERMANY	3	
NICARAGUA	3	
PANAMA	3	
THAILAND	3	
VENEZUELA	3	
CANADA	2	
FRANCE	2	
KAZAKHSTAN	2	
POLAND	2	
AUSTRALIA	1	
BULGARIA	1	
CAMEROON	1	
CHINA	1	
COLOMBIA	1	
CONGO	1	
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	1	
GEORGIA	1	
GHANA	1	
IRELAND	1	
LATVIA	1	
MONTENEGRO	1	
NAMIBIA	1	
NEW ZEALAND	1	
UGANDA	1	

Countries out (from last month): *Armenia (Arthur Abraham), Sweden (Anthony Yigit)* • ***Countries in:*** *Australia (Jeff Horn)*

U.S. VS. AMERICA

The Americas – North, South and Central – boast almost half of all fighters rated by the RING, 84 of 176. And while the U.S. remains the dominant country, 10 other American nations have at least one rated fighter. Here is how the U.S. compares with the rest of America.

DIVISION	U.S.	THE REST
HEAVYWEIGHTS	2	2
CRUISERWEIGHTS	0	0
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS	3	3
SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	4	1
MIDDLEWEIGHTS	2	2
JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS	5	3
WELTERWEIGHTS	6	1
JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS	4	1
LIGHTWEIGHTS	2	3
JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS	2	5
FEATHERWEIGHTS	3	4
JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS	1	6
BANTAMWEIGHTS	1	4
JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS	0	5
FLYWEIGHTS	0	2
JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS	0	3
STRAWWEIGHTS	0	4
TOTAL	35	49

Note: "The rest" is represented by Mexico (23), Cuba (5), Argentina (4), Puerto Rico (4), Nicaragua (3), Panama (3), Venezuela (3), Canada (2), Colombia (1) and Dominican Republic (1)

DOWN, NOT OUT

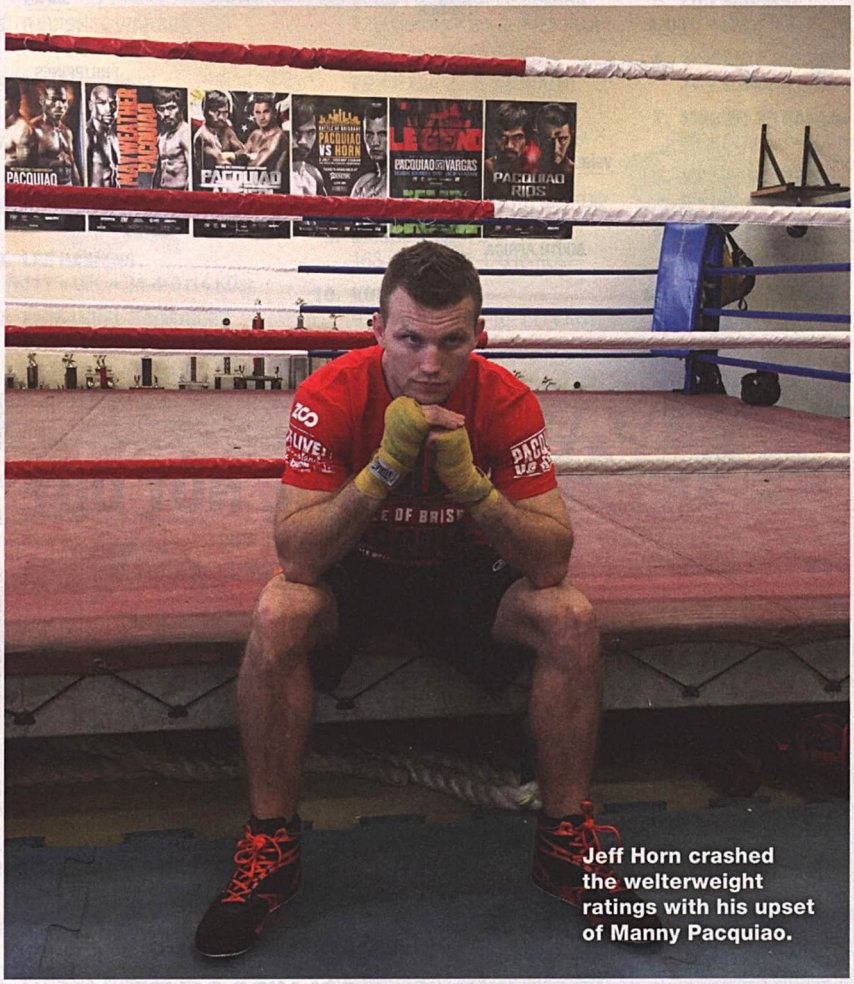
Some of those in the RING Ratings have lost more than their share of fights but battled their way into contention. Here are the rated fighters with the lowest winning percentages (in order of lowest percentage).

65.5 TATSUYA FUKUHARA
72.0 ADRIAN GRANADOS
72.1 ORLANDO SALIDO
73.0 MASAYUKI KURODA
75.0 KOHEI KONO
76.9 BYRON ROJAS
77.5 ANTHONY CROLLA
78.3 SIMPHIWE KHONCO
80.0 FIRAT ARSLAN
80.0 GANIGAN LOPEZ
80.5 RAY BELTRAN
80.6 LIBORIO SOLIS
80.6 AKIRA YAEGASHI

FOCUS ON ...

WELTERWEIGHTS

A breakdown of THE RING Top 10 in one division each month, plus a list of fighters on the cusp of breaking through. This month: the 147-pounders.



Jeff Horn crashed the welterweight ratings with his upset of Manny Pacquiao.

MOST WEEKS RATED: KELL BROOK **327**

FEWEST WEEKS RATED: JEFF HORN **4**

OLDEST: MANNY PACQUIAO **38**

YOUNGEST: ERROL SPENCE JR. **27**

MOST FIGHTS: PACQUIAO **68**

FEWEST FIGHTS: HORN **18**

HIGHEST WINNING PERCENTAGE: SPENCE, KEITH THURMAN **100 PERCENT**

LOWEST WINNING PERCENTAGE: PACQUIAO **86.8 PERCENT**

MOST KOS: PACQUIAO **38**

FEWEST KOS: HORN **11**

LONGEST CURRENT WINNING STREAK: THURMAN **28 FIGHTS**

ON THE POUND-FOR-POUND LIST: NONE

TITLEHOLDERS IN THE TOP 10: HORN **(WBO),** SPENCE **(IBF),** THURMAN **(WBA, WBC)**

ON THE CUSP (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER): QUDRATILLO ABDUQAXOROV, LUIS COLLAZO, OMAR FIGUEROA, KONSTANTIN PONOMAREV, BRADLEY SKEETE

OLD SCHOOL 8

THE RING staff members' current champions in the original eight weight classes.

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MIDDLEWEIGHT: GENNADY GOLOVKIN
WELTERWEIGHT: TERENCE CRAWFORD
LIGHTWEIGHT: VASYL LOMACHENKO
FEATHERWEIGHT: LEO SANTA CRUZ
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FLYWEIGHT: KAZUTO IOKA

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MIKE COPPINGER SENIOR WRITER

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LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT: ANDRE WARD
MIDDLEWEIGHT: GENNADY GOLOVKIN
WELTERWEIGHT: TERENCE CRAWFORD
LIGHTWEIGHT: VASYL LOMACHENKO
FEATHERWEIGHT: LEO SANTA CRUZ
BANTAMWEIGHT: ROMAN GONZALEZ
FLYWEIGHT: KAZUTO IOKA

Note: *This is how the weights break down: Heavyweight includes cruiserweight, light heavyweight includes super middleweight, all divisions middleweight through flyweight include the "junior" versions, and flyweight also includes strawweight.*

THE ROAD TO CANELO VS. GGG

Canelo Alvarez and Gennady Golovkin have taken different paths in their careers but have arrived at the same place: They're now two of the most respected fighters in the sport. This 37-page preview package explores their ascension and much more leading to their showdown. »

CANELO ALVAREZ
ALWAYS A FIGHTER
PG. 32

GENNADY GOLOVKIN
MOTIVATED BY CHALLENGES
PG. 40

BOXING EDUCATION
DIFFERENT APPROACHES
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THE BEST AT 160
RING KINGS, FROM 1 TO 31
PG. 54

WHO WINS?
BREAKING IT DOWN
PG. 60

DATE: SEPTEMBER 16 • **SITE:** T-MOBILE ARENA, LAS VEGAS • **TV:** HBO PAY-PER-VIEW

THE DIFFERENT ONE

CANELO ALVAREZ DEMONSTRATED EARLY AND OFTEN THAT HE WAS NO ORDINARY FIGHTER

By **Ron Borges**

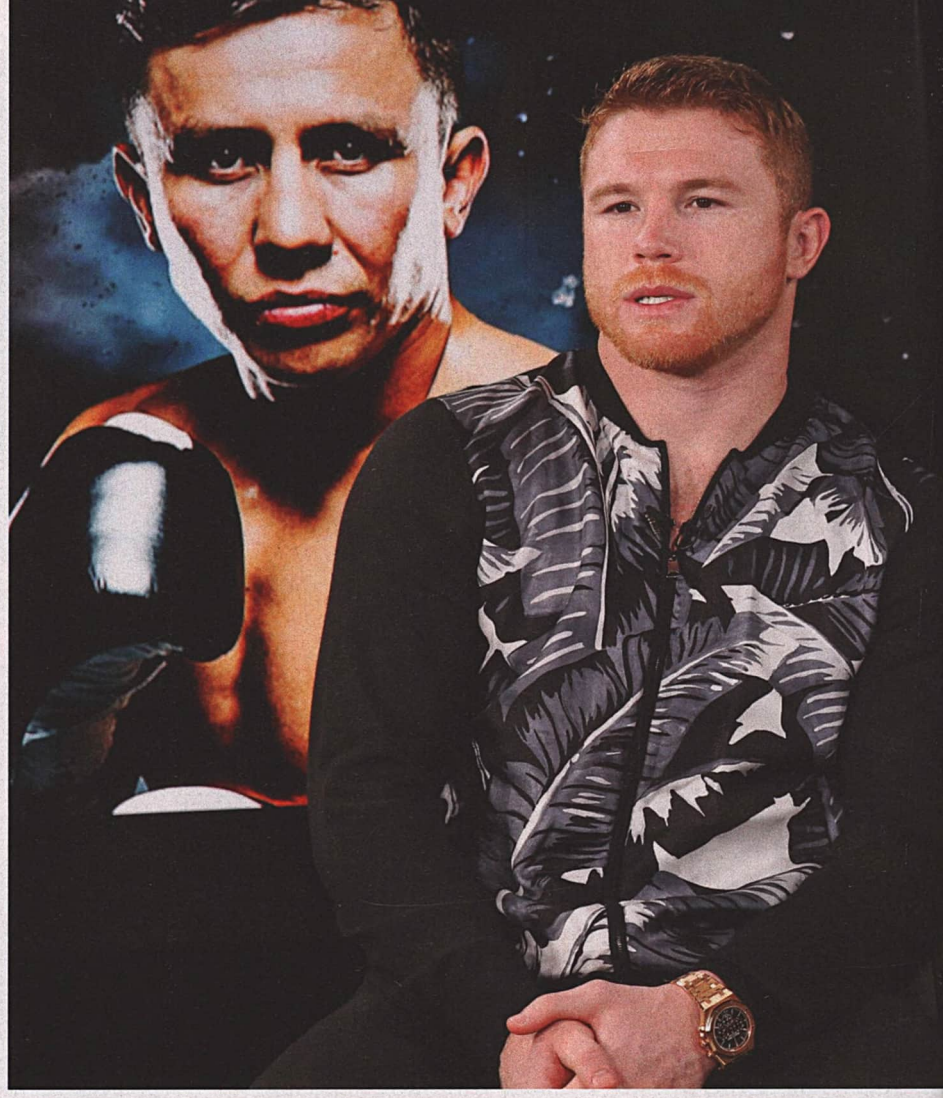
Once he rode the bus to work. Now he arrives in private planes and Cadillac Escalades. In 10 years, much has changed for Saul "Canelo" Alvarez but one thing has not: Rich or poor, he has always remained a fighter.

Not a rock star, although he is often treated like one. Not a politician, although he is more popular in fractured Mexico than *El Presidente* himself. Always he has understood what he is. He is a *boxeador profesional*. »

Canelo Alvarez admires things of beauty, including a panoramic view of Manhattan and his handiwork against Carlos Baldomir. Canelo was in New York to promote his fight against Gennady Golovkin.

AP PHOTO/JULIO CORTEZ | EPIC

THE DIFFERENT ONE



(Above) The next big challenge of Canelo's career looms large. (Right) Canelo stopped British veteran Ryan Rhodes in the 12th and final round to retain his WBC title in 2011.

Canelo Alvarez is not someone lost in a fractured identity crisis. He is at 27 what he was at 11, when he first visited a boxing gym with his brother Rigoberto. He is at 27 what he was at 15, when he left school and his father's ice cream shop to enter the sometimes sordid but often splendid world of prizefighting.

Canelo Alvarez is a fighter, as Gennady Golovkin is about to find out. Whether he is a good enough one to beat the undefeated, unified middleweight titleholder in only his second full-fledged foray into the 160-pound weight class will be decided on September 16 in Las Vegas. For now, as he prepares for his greatest challenge, it is enough that he remembers the boy who used to ride that bus for an hour to get from his family's sweltering cement block home in Juanacatlan, Mexico, to the gym of Eddy Reynoso and his father, Jose "Chepo" Reynoso, in Guadalajara. Remembers the hunger in that boy's belly to show the world he was not just a pale-skinned, redheaded novelty, not just another Mexican kid dreaming of being the next Chavez.

Boxing is most often a nightmare for dreamers. It is the loneliest job in sports. To seek it is to embark on a hard road to glory. Trainers can help you. Promoters can hype you. Writers can glorify you. But when the bell rings, you stand – or fall – alone.

Canelo has always understood and accepted this. It is part of boxing's dark allure. In the ring you are on your own, left to face a menacing opponent with mayhem on his mind. Nothing can help you but fury in your fists and calmness in your mind in the face of looming chaos.

If you can learn to function in the midst of such bedlam – fists and hangers-on coming at you with equally dangerous intentions – boxing becomes a simple endeavor. Kill or be killed. Yet in other ways, as Canelo learned four years ago when tasting the only loss of his career, it can be a decidedly more complicated exercise.

Floyd Mayweather Jr. taught him that lesson by baffling him more than beating him, controlling both the pre-fight hysteria that surrounds a multi-million dollar boxing event and the fight itself. That night Mayweather won a majority decision from a then 23-year-old Canelo more with his mind than his muscle. In Canelo's world, it was more like a pillow fight than an exercise in bruising, but when it was over his hand was not raised for the first time in nearly a decade.

Canelo, it is said, learned much during that encounter. Learned things that have made all the time spent promoting the Golovkin fight easier to handle. Who knew the kid riding that bus day after day would one morning be led into a room stacked with 1,200 pairs of boxing gloves and told he must sign them all. What gym prepares you for that?

Who knew how tedious and mind-bending all the interviews and photo shoots and press conferences can become, your opponent's face either literally or figuratively always in your own? Who could understand the difficulty of maintaining focus on the only thing that counts – preparing for your opponent – when every day there is a new distraction, another person pulling at you?

There is no escape from The Big Fight until it is over. It is like a patient assassin, constantly stalking you, never letting you relax or escape from its ominous shadow. Dark of night or first light of dawn it is there, never letting you forget, "I'm coming for YOU!"

That is a difficult situation to confront at any age, but then so was a decision to fight your way out of Juanacatlan. Difficult but not impossible if you have The Gift.

AP PHOTO/KATHY WILLENS; (RIGHT)

THE BEGINNING

Canelo Alvarez was always The Different One.

Youngest of eight children, seven of them boys, Canelo – "Cinnamon" – did not look like the rest. He alone bore the red hair and light complexion of his mother, Ana Maria. People noticed and they laughed.

He also seemed to lack the fighting spirit of a family of boxers. As a youngster, kids picked on him, taunting him about his red hair and freckled face. He didn't fight back. People noticed and they laughed.

Then one day, according to the family history, the dam broke. A much larger boy who had spent many days tormenting Canelo spoke up once too often. Suddenly the tiny redhead was all over him, bashing him in the face, bloodying his nose, learning for the first time he had what his brothers did not. He had a gift for mayhem.

At 11, Canelo followed Rigoberto to the Julian Magdaleno Gym. That's where he found the Reynosos, who became his lifelong trainers and mentors. In a sense they are his creators. They would build the boy into a *boxeador*. But *el campeon del mundo*? The champion of the world? Who but a boy can dream such things?

The Reynosos initially thought only of training this one like all the rest. Teach him the fundamentals. Balance. Leverage. How to throw a hook with bad intentions. Teach him. Then we'll see what we've got.

In three years they had plenty. Canelo had a 44-2 amateur record and had won Mexico's junior national championship at 14. He'd also convinced other trainers to keep their kids away from the red-headed boy with the thick jaw. The boy who once would not fight now could not find anyone to fight.

Because of that, he turned pro at 15 and, depending on whom you believe, either won 10 of his first 11 fights by knockout or 20 of his first 21, the latter 10 the Reynosos claim having taken place off the books in small Mexican venues where records are not kept and cops are avoided.

About the same time, his parents divorced and the large family was subdivided. Canelo ended up with his mother but at one point there was a family reunion of sorts. On June 28, 2008, Canelo and his brothers set an unusual record when all seven of them fought on the same card. Three were making their pro debuts and lost. Canelo did not.

One story Chepo Reynoso loves to recall as an illustration of who Canelo was becoming is a night his teenaged fighter was matched against an older, bigger and heavily tattooed opponent. Reynoso was concerned. He expressed this to Canelo.

Reynoso told him he was worried not only because of the size difference but because he knew little about the opponent. Then the bell sounded and not long after it tolled Canelo dropped the man with a fierce

body shot that would become his trademark punch.

After the referee counted the guy out, the teenager returned to his corner and told his old trainer, "There's your fucking worry."

Soon after that a decision was made: It was time to call Oscar De La Hoya.

THE RISE

"Chepo is from my parents' hometown," Golden Boy Promotions president and chief matchmaker Eric Gomez recalls when asked about the first time he heard of Canelo Alvarez. "I always ask the guys we work with to keep us in mind if they have a kid coming along.

"It's the same conversation with every trainer and manager. Everybody has the next Oscar. The next Pacquiao. The next Floyd. You listen but you don't know."

When Reynoso contacted him about Canelo, Gomez asked for a video. The fighter was only 14 at the time but there was something there that caught Gomez's eye.

He went to Mexico to watch him spar with former champions Javier Jauregui and Oscar Larios, two fighters the Reynosos also trained. What he saw impressed him.

"He was holding his own with them," Gomez said. "Every time I'd go see him spar, he was getting better."

But he noticed something more. He noticed the body-punching and also an unusual patience not often seen in young fighters. He fought with fire but also with calm attention.

"It is a virtue that I have," Canelo said of his demeanor inside the ring and out. "It's the confidence that the hard work has been done. People expect me to go for the knockout but I never go for it. If it comes, it comes."

As time passed, Canelo continued to win and was soon a staple of Televisa, the massive Mexican broadcasting conglomerate that is beamed into the majority of Mexican homes. He was becoming a star.

Although he had not yet signed him, De La Hoya agreed to put Canelo on a Golden Boy show in California against a skilled journeyman named Larry Mosley in 2008. It was a test.

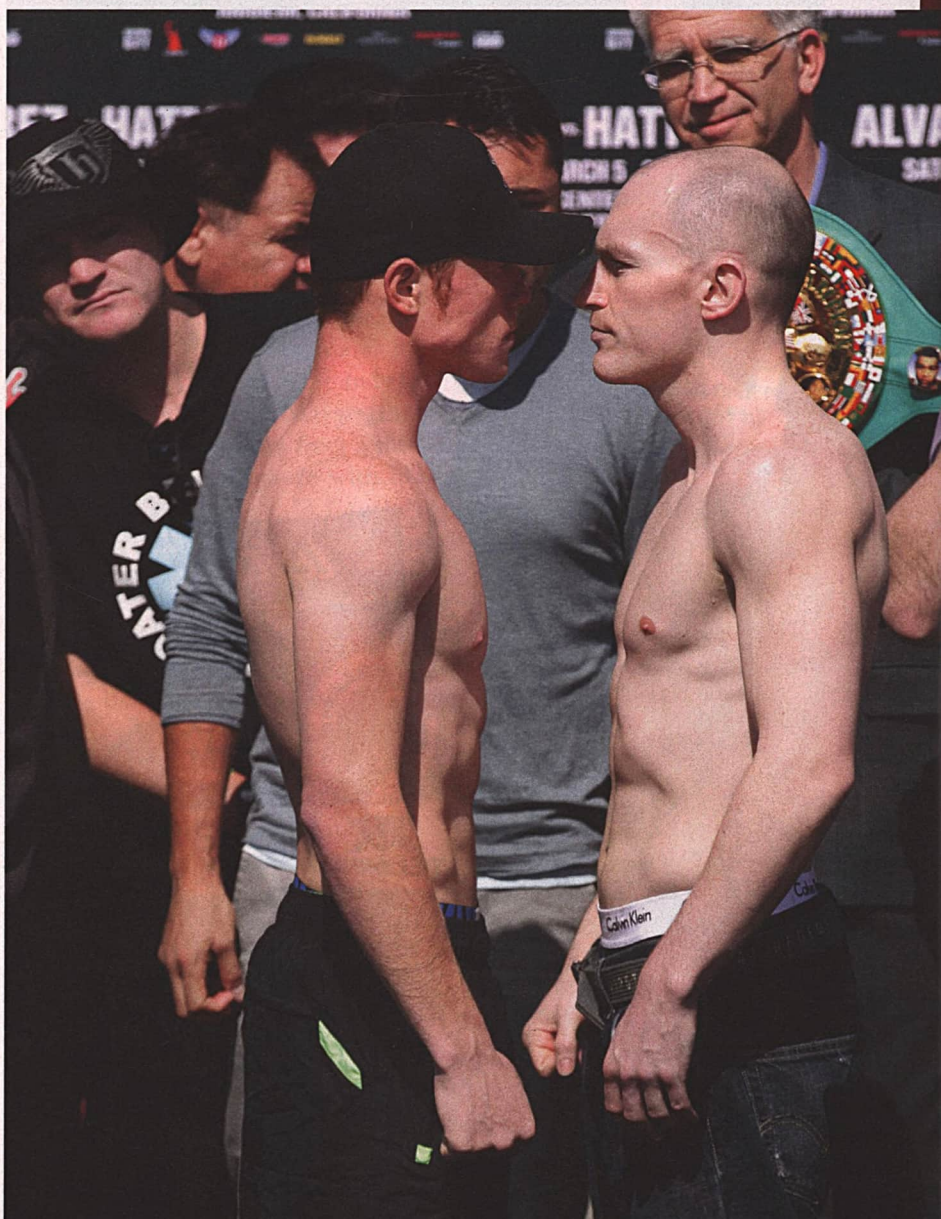
"Larry was no pushover," Gomez said. "He'd been a good amateur and he was a good pro. Canelo wasn't that impressive that night but he found a way to win. We didn't sign him immediately but we kept watching him."

Three fights later, in Zapopan, Mexico, Gomez matched Canelo against undefeated Euri Gonzalez. Gomez knew Gonzalez had fast hands and testing power. It was a pop quiz, literally, and Canelo passed – but not without a moment of high tension.

"Canelo got hit with a big right hand along the ropes halfway through the fight," Gomez said. "He got hurt but he came back and stopped him in the 11th round. That's the night we thought we had something special."

Canelo fought eight more times, mostly in Mexico, before De La Hoya signed him to a promotional deal in 2010 and quickly tested him against former world champion Carlos Baldomir. Baldomir was verbally insulting to his young opponent, dismissing him as another kid who had chosen the wrong business.

Canelo said little in public but privately seethed. That night he



(Left) Canelo was a babe of 20 when he outpointed Matthew Hatton to win the first of his five world titles. (Above) Some of those close to Canelo didn't want him to fight the slick Erislandy Lara but things worked out.

(LEFT) AP PHOTO/JAE C. HONG; (ABOVE) AP PHOTO/JAE C. HONG

exploded the way he had when that kid taunted him one time too many, dropping Baldomir late in the sixth round with a hard left hook. Dazed and unable to clear his head, Baldomir was counted out by referee Jose Cobian. It was the first time in 16 years he'd been stopped.

"Baldomir was a risky fight but I'd seen things that made us confident he could outbox him," Gomez said. "He did more than we expected."

Hadn't he always?

Seven months later he would become the youngest junior middleweight titleholder in history when he outpointed Matthew Hatton – the brother of Ricky – for the vacant WBC belt. By then his brother Rigoberto had briefly held the "interim" WBA junior middleweight title, losing it in his first defense to Austin Trout.

Canelo would avenge that loss 26 months later when he ignored De La Hoya's advice and accepted a bout with the confounding Trout, a master boxer slicker than motor oil, against whom it was difficult to look good. Canelo dropped him in the seventh round and won a unanimous decision. It seemed it would be left to the youngest of the fighting Alvarez brothers to make the deepest mark in boxing. He was the one who had the magic.

"I was against that fight," said longtime California promoter and matchmaker Don Chargin, who serves as a consigliere on boxing matters for De La Hoya and Gomez. "I liked Canelo from the first time I saw him. He was one of those old-school Mexican fighters. He threw the hook to the liver like it was born in him.

"But I always hated to see a guy who makes good fights in with guys with that awful defensive style like Trout and (Erislandy) Lara (whom Canelo would outpoint two fights after losing to Mayweather). Canelo didn't care. The great fighters want to fight everybody. That's him.

"In the end he was right and I was wrong," Chargin continued. "He showed in those fights he was able to adapt. He was still a great body-puncher but his combinations were improving. They had more quickness and snap. His confidence was growing."

So, too, was his popularity. He was by then the most popular fighter in Mexico and not even being outboxed by Mayweather could derail him.

"I felt Canelo was ready for the Floyd fight," Gomez said. "I thought he was too big and too strong. I thought he would overwhelm him. Oscar felt he wasn't ready yet. He thought he was too young, but their coaches convinced Oscar and I agreed.

"If you're a baseball player, you want to play the Yankees and the Dodgers. This was the same way. You had to let him do it.

"Ultimately we were wrong and Oscar was right, but my mindset was Floyd was not going to be able to hurt Canelo. The only way he could win was by running, so you look at the risk and you see it, but the reward was huge and the risk was not. So we took it.

"Yes, Canelo lost a majority decision but he came out of that fight bigger than ever. More popular in Mexico. And now he was popular in the U.S. too."

Canelo seems to take his stardom in stride, as he did during the New York stop on the press tour.

KING OF THE BOX OFFICE

Four fights after Mayweather, Canelo faced RING, lineal and WBC middleweight titleholder Miguel Cotto at a catchweight of 155 pounds. Cotto was content with that and Canelo had not yet grown physically into the full-fledged middleweight he believes he will be when he faces Golovkin in September. It was another test against a rugged opponent a shade past his prime at 35 but still dangerous.

Surprisingly, Cotto stayed on his toes most of the fight as Canelo punched his way to a unanimous decision by wide margins on the scorecards – but not so in the minds of some, including Cotto. In the end, that didn't matter. Canelo, who still holds the RING championship, had completed a long journey from the boy on the bus to a boxer on the mountaintop.

"We're very proud of Canelo today," trainer Eddy Reynoso said at the time. "As we all know, he started from the bottom and now he's the champion. I was never worried about him from the first round through to the 12th round."

Although there was a clamor to face Golovkin next, his handlers knew better. Although a star in Mexico, he was not yet a full-blown pay-per-view phenomenon in the U.S. and frankly neither was Golovkin, who was knocking out second-line fighters with regularity but never getting the chance to face the kind of opponent who can define an elite boxer's career.

"Canelo was struggling a little more than usual to make 154 but he wasn't a full-fledged middleweight yet," Gomez said. "We felt all along he would be, but we let his body grow and develop naturally into being a true middleweight. While he was doing it he was gaining experience. He was becoming a seasoned-pro. He needed that."

Six months after beating Cotto, Canelo blew away former junior welterweight titleholder Amir Khan, knocking him cold with a savage overhand right at 2:37 of the sixth round. Khan landed on his back and referee Kenny Bayless knew he didn't need to count. The lights were out.

During his post-fight interview, Canelo invited Golovkin into the ring to address growing criticism that he was avoiding the Kazakhstani. "In Mexico," he said, "we don't fuck around. I don't fear anyone."

Now the talk grew more incessant to face Golovkin next, but Golden Boy made the decision to try and make history first. Canelo went back to 154 pounds to face WBO junior middleweight champion Liam Smith at AT&T Stadium, the massive home of the Dallas Cowboys, in search of a record live gate.

Smith was a relative unknown in the U.S. but it didn't matter. By now, Canelo was a box-office success, a point he drove home by attracting a crowd of 51,240. Among them was Golovkin, who was one of the few who didn't wince when Canelo stopped Smith with a body shot.

Now there was only one piece of business left before facing Golovkin, a bit of local business that would also allow Canelo to test himself above 160. He wanted one last local brawl for Mexican bragging rights.

For a number of years, Canelo and Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. battled to become Mexico's most popular fighter. While most felt Canelo was superior, Chavez had both the weight of his father's legacy as Mexico's greatest fighter and his own heavy hands behind him.

Chavez would eventually win the WBC middleweight title but lose it and the respect of Canelo after a string of lackluster performances, training issues and weight problems. But Chavez was always spoiling for a fight with Alvarez and on May 6 he got it.

"He was testing his body at a new weight," Gomez said. "It was also personal. He wanted to prove who was better."

Canelo won every round on all three cards, patiently potshotting Chavez but never taking a foolish chance pursuing a knockout that wasn't available because of Chavez's cautious approach. A few minutes after it was over, Golovkin walked into the ring.

It was the first time anyone could remember a post-fight press conference that was really the kickoff press conference for the most anticipated showdown of the year. After Golovkin made his ring walk to the strains of "Seven Nation Army" by The White Stripes as smoke and flashing lights surrounded him, the two fighters sat in the middle of the ring wearing business suits, not boxing shorts, because that's what this was. It was a final business meeting to announce Canelo Alvarez's second chance to rule his sport and Golovkin's first.

"My fans know I started from nothing, from the bottom up," Canelo (49-1-1, 34 KO) said. "From zero. I've worked my way up with a lot of sweat and sacrifices. I've never feared anyone since I was 16 and fighting as a professional. When I was born, fear was gone. I never got my share of fear."

No fear since the day he bloodied a bully's nose in the street in Juanacatlan. Now that boy has his chance to remind the world he is more than just a *boxeador profesional*. He is what he dreamed of being on all those long bus rides. He is *el campeon del mundo*, just like his idol growing up, Julio Cesar Chavez Sr. And he intends to stay one.

"This is Canelo's opportunity to be considered great," Gomez said. "This is for boxing history. He wants to be a bigger star than Chavez." RING

THE QUIET MAN

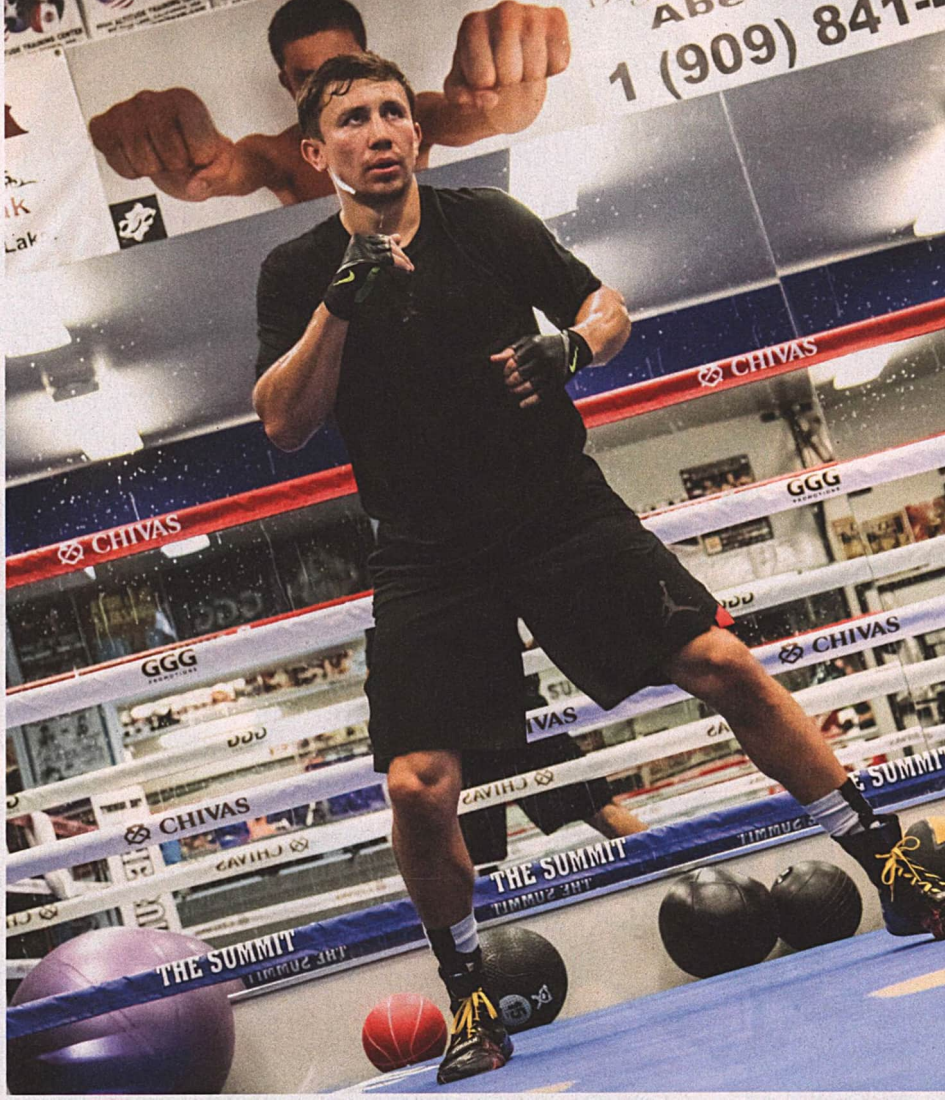
GENNADY GOLOVKIN IS FOCUSED ON NOTHING BUT THE CHALLENGE AT HAND

By **Brian Harty** • Photos by **Ian Hughes**

The Summit Gym is in a piney mountain neighborhood with streets named after unremarkable birds ("Thrush," "Wren"). Still, you expect you'll know it when you see it. And then you will drive past it. Probably more than once. The most combative thing about the white duplex with the spacious driveway is the "No trespassing" sign at the edge of the property.

Inside, you'll pass under clusters of boxing gloves as if in a pugilistic orchard. The walls are papered with boxing images edge-to-edge. There's a well-seasoned ring, the full range of punching bags, a stereo playing Russian pop duets, an indifferent department-store mannequin and the literal architect of it all, Abel Sanchez. »

Golovkin (with trainer Abel Sanchez on the right and cruiserweight contender Murat Gassiev at left) is charming and unassuming out of the ring. His game face (above) is a bit more serious.



Golovkin (above) has found a home in the California ski-resort town of Big Bear Lake, California (right).

Sanchez, who was born in Tijuana, Mexico, 61 years ago and brought to Los Angeles by his mother when he was 5, is always smiling in anticipation of the next sentence, whether it be yours or his (odds heavily in favor of his). Rapid-fire wisdom spills out of him, information is eagerly absorbed and the joy he clearly derives from his surroundings is consistent whether he is discussing his golf handicap or a liver punch. His love of silence is just as potent, though.

"Everybody here is quiet, everybody's hard-working," said Sanchez when I visited his facility in Big Bear Lake, California, 7,000 feet above where L.A. meets the sea a couple hours' drive to the west. "Every gym has a persona, and this gym has the Golovkin persona."

That persona's namesake is everywhere you look. From murals and promotional posters to more intimate snapshots documenting a career's worth of middleweight triumphs, the face of Gennady Golovkin does indeed define the space. But if Sanchez is a strange case of two strong personalities in the same body, then Golovkin is Jekyll and Hyde.

One photo in particular nails it. It's the fighter in January 2013, in the ring at the Theater in Madison Square Garden seconds after winning a fight against Gabriel Rosado by seventh-round TKO. Astonishingly, Rosado remained on his feet until his corner threw in the towel that night, but in the photo the cost of his ordeal is splattered all over Golovkin's face and shoulders. A director staging the fight might've told the make-up artist to scale back the blood for realism. And yet here is the victor, 12 fights into a knockout streak that would eventually reach 23 and earn him the titles of "most feared" and "most avoided" man in boxing, not reveling in gore, as one might assume a fighter once nicknamed "The God of War" would, but quietly saluting one quadrant of the arena with a simple kiss on his crimson-flecked glove. Perhaps even more unnerving than a primal scream is the calm.

"I don't like fight. I understand fight," said Golovkin in choppy English. He's from Kazakhstan and speaks multiple languages but mainly Russian. "Nobody likes it, seriously. You like this face? No. You like broken hand? No."

This is the allure of Golovkin, now popularly known as "GGG" (his initials, usually spoken as "Triple-G"). In conversation, he is serene and funny, his humility is sincere and his wide grin is charming. He unfailingly compliments his opponents, both before and after a fight, however long it lasts, but in between those two bells he's like a nightmare you have after binge-watching "Shark Week." His in-ring demeanor and punching power are scary enough that some have suggested his nickname should instead be "666."

As Sanchez once heard Golovkin describe it: "When I'm talking to you outside the ring I'm Gennady Golovkin. When I step through the ropes I'm Triple-G."

It's the sort of quote that will probably soon be heard over slow-motion footage of him shadowboxing in front of a mirror, as HBO's "24/7" crews have once again been mobilized to light the torches for the next superfight. On September 16 in Las Vegas, "Gennady Golovkin" will send "GGG" into what is surely the most important battle of "their" life: a middleweight championship fight against Canelo Alvarez. It's the biggest puncher against the biggest star, millions to be made, issues to be settled, legacies to be forged.

But as dramatic as they are, slow-motion gazes and all, Golovkin says those storylines don't get him out of

IANHUGHES.COM

bed in the morning.

For those of us ostensibly dedicated to finding the ones that do, there are bits about his past scattered online that point to the promised land. Hardship. Loss. All the reasons for what a fighter does and why he does it so vehemently. The inciting incidents of great boxing stories.

I'd read those stories before I drove up the mountain to interview Golovkin, and I went assuming I'd glimpsed the "why" more than the "what" of his career. I was thinking he'd probably even be pleased by a writer who wanted to get past "so how's training going?" and dig into what really matters. This delighted me because I, like so many people, respect both versions of Golovkin.

A couple days later I was telling his promoter, Tom Loeffler, what happened next.

"Yeah ...," said Loeffler with a slow deadpan that suggested I wasn't the first person to congratulate myself in advance. "Gennady doesn't really like talking about his past."

THE BEGINNING

Here's what you can believe with reasonable confidence: Golovkin was born in 1982 in Karaganda, Kazakhstan, a country that was part of the Soviet Union at the time. His mother is Korean and his late father was Russian.

Golovkin describes his hometown as being "like Texas; everybody comes for oil," except in Karaganda it was coal, which is what his dad pulled out of the ground for a living. Sanchez describes it as "like the worst part of Detroit. ... Hard town."

He wasn't exaggerating. For a long time Karaganda was Russia's depository for those it deemed to be criminals – a sort of Soviet Australia.

Golovkin had three brothers – a twin, Max, who also boxed and now works in his brother's corner, and two who were older, Vadim and Sergey. The most sensationalist versions of Golovkin's childhood read like pages from Johnny Tapia's biography, with his older brothers throwing him into human cockfights on the streets of Karaganda.

Bringing that up drew an annoyed, but patient response.

No, Golovkin said. His brothers took him to a local gym when he was around 8, 9 years old. In the gym, they began choosing opponents from the regulars.

"Everybody is tough, bigger than me, older than me. And (my brothers) used to go, 'Him?' And (I'd say), 'Yeah, no problem.'" The streetfights would come a bit later, he said, after the Soviet Union collapsed in the early 1990s and a "very bad time for Kazakhstan" ensued. In those times, kids would fight over things like a nice pair of shoes.

Why did his brothers "promote" these gym scraps? Sanchez thinks it's pretty simple: "They were 10 years older than him! You're mean to your little brother!"

But it got Golovkin in the gym, and his reputation quickly grew.

"The thing was, he handled himself," said Sanchez. "I'm sure the respect from the older guys was a lot

because this little kid was kicking the shit out of them."

When Gennady was still a child, Sergey and Vadim joined the army. Notifications of their deaths came back to his family four years apart. I asked about reports saying the Golovkins had never received any details from the government and referenced online stories using the word "battle," and the annoyance edged closer to anger. Sanchez tried to lighten the mood by saying, "It's like what Trump says: a lot of fake news."

I dropped it there.

"Certainly it's a backstory that could be used for sympathetic purposes," said Loeffler. "I mean, HBO would love nothing more than to interview his mother or show his son and his wife (who don't attend his fights). He says that's his personal life and this is his business life. This is his job, to go in the ring and defend his world titles. So he doesn't use that for personal gain, for getting sympathy from boxing fans."

No, the sympathy has always been reserved for Golovkin's opponents. In the amateurs, he reportedly had 350 fights and lost only five of them. (Some argue online that the second tally should be more like eight, thus lowering his win percentage from an overinflated 98.57 to a more human 97.71.) He was never down and never hurt, according to Sanchez.

In 2003 he won the middleweight gold medal at the World Championships in Thailand, outpointing Matt Korobov and Andy Lee and knocking out Lucian Bute along the way. He then went to the 2004 Olympics in Athens, where he bested Andre Dirrell in the semifinals but then took silver after losing to Russia's Gaydarbek Gaydarbekov on points.

Allegations that Kazakhstan's gold medal count had been capped at one ahead of the games – and that Golovkin had been told it wasn't reserved for him – have been published before. Golovkin shrugs it off as political.

Fix or not, it was a rough fight. Watch the video, and in his aggression you can see why he'd say his reputation in the gym was as a "crazy guy." But you don't get an amateur record like his just by mauling people. The balance, accuracy and power that would become hallmarks later are also there. Watch the right hook that plows through Gaydarbekov's face and without losing any speed loops around and hits it again.

It's a beautiful thing.

THE RISE

Having been scouted by several promoters during his amateur career, Golovkin chose to sign with the German company Universum and made his pro debut in 2006 against a fighter with 22 losses and a single victory. But despite his rapid climb to the top of sanctioning-body rankings, his handlers focused their resources on moving middleweight titleholders Felix Sturm and Sebastian Zbik

instead of him.

So, in 2010, after 18 wins and 15 knockouts against nobody of note, hungry for a title shot and already approaching 28 years of age, the frustrated fighter took matters into his own hands. He successfully sued to end his contract with Universum and then, having already started his own company, GGG Promotions, Golovkin took a trip to Southern California.

There he visited multiple gyms, including those run by established local trainers Freddie Roach and Robert Garcia, but felt comfortable at none of them until he found Sanchez in the seclusion of Big Bear.

"I had no clue who he was when he got here," said Sanchez. "When he walked in he looked like a damn choirboy. I thought, 'He's not a fighter.'"

But they clicked the first day.

Sanchez is a building contractor by trade (all those houses along Elliott's suburban street in the movie "E.T."? His work.) and was just getting back into training fighters after a long hiatus, but he'd already had one successful run. Despite having no gym of his own, he guided Lupe Aquino to a world title in 1987. He did the same with Terry Norris a few years later, and then again with Terry's older brother Orlin.

Echoing Golovkin's experiences in Karaganda, Sanchez's own father had arranged fights in his front yard for his son and other kids in the neighborhood – not to be sadistic, he just figured they'd fight anyway so they might as well do it in a controlled setting and learn to handle themselves.

Control is a thing with Sanchez. He travels with his own scale, always has a backup version of everything, works on cuts himself, scoffs at nutritionists and has no assistants. If the equipment he needs doesn't exist, he invents it. He has multiple top-of-the-line cameras and photographs his own fighters in his own studio (hence the mannequin, which he uses to position lights). Before the sponsorship deal with Nike, Sanchez used to paint Golovkin's shoes with nail polish to match his trunks. He described himself as anal-retentive, and I agreed.

He also has a relentless competitive streak and a bruising work ethic. His fighters do 3,600 sit-ups a day. They have no idea how far they'll run when they wake up. Sanchez pushes them beyond routines into no-man's land so the boundaries of actual prizefights seem quaint.

He began immediately with his new charge, tweaking Golovkin's obvious talents to fine-tune a style that would appeal to American audiences. To develop GGG's now-famous ring generalship, they watched videos of cutting horses trained to herd cattle. After nine months, Sanchez knew he had the best fighter he'd ever worked with.

Their first fight together was in Panama against Milton Nunez, whom Golovkin knocked out in the first round. After two more victories, they teamed up with Loeffler, who had launched his company, K2 Promotions, with heavyweight brothers Vitali and Wladimir Klitschko.

Golovkin's debut with K2 was against Lajuan Simon in Germany – again, a first-round knockout – but Loeffler had his eye on American cable so he began pushing his client hard. He soon encountered trouble, though: Nobody wanted to fight his guy.

"I told HBO and Showtime both ... he doesn't need a lot of money, he'll fight anyone you put in front of him," said Loeffler. "Literally they gave me a list of 20 guys and Gennady approved all of them. Andre Ward was on the list, Sergio Martinez was on the list, (Julio Cesar) Chavez Jr., (Kelly) Pavlik – all the guys were on the list."

In 2012, the WBA ordered Sturm (whom Loeffler calls "the worst avoider") to defend his title against Golovkin. HBO's plan was for the winner to fight the winner of IBF titleholder Daniel Geale vs. Dmitry Pirog (who had recently knocked out Daniel Jacobs in a shocker) and unify the titles. According to Loeffler, Sturm instead exploited a loophole favoring unification fights and lured Geale to Germany by offering him $600,000 – significantly more than the $250,000 he'd get for Pirog.

That left Pirog for Golovkin, but then Pirog pulled out with an injury four weeks before the fight. Which is how Golovkin made his HBO debut knocking out an awkward southpaw named Grzegorz Proksa in five rounds.

The avoidance problem was just beginning, though. As was its unfortunate corollary: Golovkin wasn't getting top-tier foes.

Golovkin's next fight was Rosado, whom Loeffler credits for the willingness he showed. Those who followed – Nobuhiro Ishida (KO 3), Matthew Macklin (KO 3), Curtis Stevens (TKO 8), Osumanu Adama (TKO 7), Geale (TKO 3), Marco Antonio Rubio (KO 2) – were "the best guys who would step into the ring with him. We went out of our way to fight guys."

Despite Golovkin being "World" and then "Super World" WBA titleholder, Loeffler said they were still paying opponents equal money to get in the ring. It was only the guys with nothing to lose who would agree.

Because it wasn't just that he was beating people, it was the *way* he was beating people. Completely dominating them. It was Tyson-esque.

Golovkin's heavy hands had been creating tremors in the SoCal gym scene as well. Sam Garcia, a young trainer based farther north in Salinas, California, who began bringing fighters to spar at The Summit in 2010, remembers well the two Golovkins:

"In the summer, he'll be suntanning in front of Abel's house – you know, swim trunks – and I'm barbecuing tri-tip for him. Just a cool dude. And then he gets in the ring and he's a killer."

Garcia was struck immediately by Golovkin's quiet work ethic and how it rubbed off on everyone around him.

Curtis Stevens (left) experienced Golovkin's power first-hand in 2013.

AL BELLO

He said he witnessed some of the things that had become local folklore: Golovkin forcing heavyweights to quit, fighters saying they'd never felt anything like his power. He even saw some of the most scrutinized sparring sessions of all, when a young man named Canelo Alvarez came to Big Bear in 2011.

After acknowledging a slew of caveats – Canelo's youth and inexperience, his smaller size and his still-developing confidence – Garcia said, "I know what I saw. I know a lot of people, they want to stay neutral ... No. Golovkin destroyed Canelo in sparring. He was doing what he wanted, when he wanted to do it."

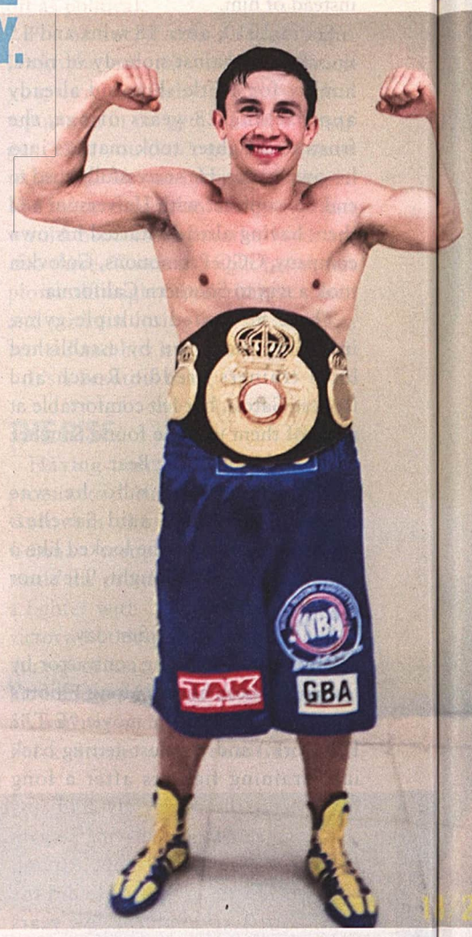
Things had changed by 2015. Canelo had become the RING middleweight champion by nearly shutting out Miguel Cotto, but this never sat well with some purists because the fight had taken place at a catchweight of 155 pounds, not the traditional 160-pound limit. His first defense, also at 155 pounds, was a frightening knockout of Amir Khan, who'd last fought at 147. Canelo wasn't a real middleweight, critics said, and he was sitting on a title he didn't deserve. And, specifically, they accused him of avoiding Golovkin.

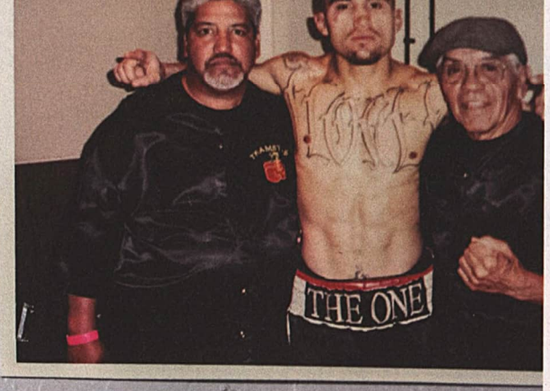
And so the drumbeat for Canelo vs. GGG got steadily louder. After Khan had been restored to full consciousness, Canelo invited Golovkin into the ring and told him in graphic terms that he was not afraid – that *no* Mexican is afraid. As expected, that played well with Canelo's massive fanbase of Mexican admirers.

But Garcia had also witnessed another phenomenon in the gym, one that would ultimately yield some irony. He said every time Golovkin sparred, the Mexican fighters, all of them bound to a tradition of uncompromising brawlers, would stop what they were doing and gather around the ring.

"You gotta watch this guy," they'd say. "He's what we want to be."

'WHEN HE WALKED IN HE LOOKED LIKE A DAMN CHOIRBOY. I THOUGHT, 'HE'S NOT A FIGHTER.'' – ABEL SANCHEZ





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WHAT REALLY MATTERS

After lunch at a local Mexican restaurant where Golovkin's photo is the first thing you see upon entering, I was back at The Summit watching him shadowbox.

It was just him and me in the room and there was the clear sense that he was still annoyed by my presence. That, plus the discomfort from the earlier interview and the platter of carnitas in my stomach, was making me feel a bit unwell. Suddenly he stopped mid-punch and walked over to the ropes. It's at that moment I realized that this man could destroy my entire skeleton with his bare hands.

"Let me ask you a question. Serious question."

"OK," I said.

"How long have you worked at RING magazine?"

I was relieved by how un-serious this question was. "About four years."

And then Golovkin said, "Why does RING hate me?"

I was blindsided. I blurted out what any desperate, panicked man would say: "What? I *love* you!"

The Golovkin standing in front of me was a star. When he'd referred to Rosado in his post-fight interview by saying, "He is good boy," the compliment was immediately converted into a catchphrase. When he spoke of the "big drama show" he wanted to deliver, people adopted that term as well. And not mockingly, either. This new, quirky Golovkin-speak was a language they wanted to hear. He was a fighter they wanted to watch.

The superfight had been sealed after Canelo eviscerated Chavez Jr. at a catchweight of 164.5 pounds. Golovkin had already picked up two more belts, the IBF with an eighth-round TKO of David Lemieux and an upgraded WBC version when Canelo vacated it to avoid what he perceived to be a premature clash. Golovkin's apparent struggle in his last fight, a KO streak-breaking decision over Jacobs, had pushed the odds for this Mexican vs. "Mexican" fight into the vicinity of even.

Golovkin was a national hero in his country, on a level that hasn't been seen since perhaps Manny Pacquiao at his peak. He was about to net millions of dollars – at least 20, by Loeffler's reckoning. And a step closer to boxing's highest distinction – greatness – was there for the taking.

All that ... and he was upset that my employer didn't recognize him as undisputed middleweight champion of the world, since Canelo still holds the RING title.

He's not the first to bring up the issue, of course, and he's not the only one to object. I'm very familiar with passionate arguments on both sides and I have my own opinions. The shortest answer, whether you buy it or not, is lineage.

But the question had never been posed so viscerally, and, once I had the two hours' worth of road between me and The Summit, it produced a sort of clarity.

It had been little more than voyeurism to ask about his family, regardless of questions I still had about what I'd read vs. what I'd been told. An attempt to reverse engineer my own "big drama show." And wondering whether he "liked" fighting was just a stupid question. None of that would matter in September. Neither would the amateur record, who avoided whom, whether this version of GGG could beat that version of Canelo, the money or the Hall of Fame. As Sanchez said, his fighters don't know how far they'll be running when they get up. The past and the future don't exist.

The walls of The Summit Gym are covered with faces from the past, including that of a newly arrived Golovkin in 2010 (previous page).

Golovkin suddenly became any person who wants to feel satisfied when he clocks out, like anyone with ambition – albeit at an extraordinary level – who fears boredom more than a broken nose. It now made perfect sense how "GGG" could coexist with "Gennady Golovkin," the quiet, private "hockey dad," as Loeffler had described him.

"Sometimes (it) interests me, beating (an opponent)," Golovkin had said earlier, describing no one in particular. "He's like tall guy, he's coming ... he says, 'I know boxing.' 'OK, show me your boxing.' Then you (fight) him and you show him he's nothing. It's more interest. It's more ... more like ..."

Sanchez smiled knowingly and offered a word: "Challenge."

"Challenge!" Golovkin said. "Yeah, right. Who's better, you know?"

Canelo has said the same thing: He wants to fight the best. These two boxers are separated by many things, but there's no reason to doubt that they share this simple desire any less than the ring they will share on September 16.

Golovkin wants to win and he wants to leave no doubt. His ability to do both has shaken the sport of boxing.

With him, that's all you need to know. RING

SEPARATE PATHS

FIGHTERS WHO LEARN THE ROPES IN THE AMATEUR RANKS **(GGG)** OR AS YOUNG PROS **(CANELO)** CAN REACH THE SAME HEIGHTS

By **Doug Fischer**

Canelo Alvarez (above) turned pro about six months before Gennady Golovkin did even though he's eight years younger.

Vasyl Lomachenko's legendary amateur credentials earned him a title shot in only his second professional bout, in 2014. He lost that fight to Orlando Salido, a less talented, less skilled fighter with no amateur background to speak of.

Salido, a near-20-year veteran of 55 bouts at the time, utilized every pro tactic and trick – legal and illegal – over 12 rough-and-tumble rounds, earning a split decision. However, Lomachenko, who compiled a sublime 396-1 amateur record, had enough grit and savvy to push the grizzled Mexican pressure-fighter to his limits. »

SEPARATE PATHS

The harsh lessons of that one title bout gave Lomachenko enough of a pro edge to outclass talented but largely untested former U.S. amateur star Gary Russell Jr. (24-0 at the time) in his very next fight, which was for a vacant belt.

The takeaway from Lomachenko's title fights with Salido and Russell is that amateur experience is not the same thing as pro experience, but it obviously matters.

Exactly how much an extensive amateur career counts in a pro matchup is a question that will be intensely examined and debated in the final days before this year's biggest boxing event: the middleweight championship showdown between Canelo Alvarez and Gennady Golovkin.

Alvarez (49-1-1, 34 knockouts) had no more than 40 amateur bouts, according to his mentor and co-trainer, Jose "Chepo" Reynoso. Golovkin (37-0, 33 KOs), a 2003 world amateur champion and 2004 Olympic silver medalist, compiled a stellar 345-5 record in the unpaid ranks.

However, the 27-year-old Mexican star has 14 more pro bouts and, perhaps more importantly, 181 more pro rounds than the 35-year-old hero of Kazakhstan.

Who has the edge? Oddsmakers have installed Golovkin as a slight betting favorite and most boxing insiders believe his amateur pedigree is an advantage over Alvarez.

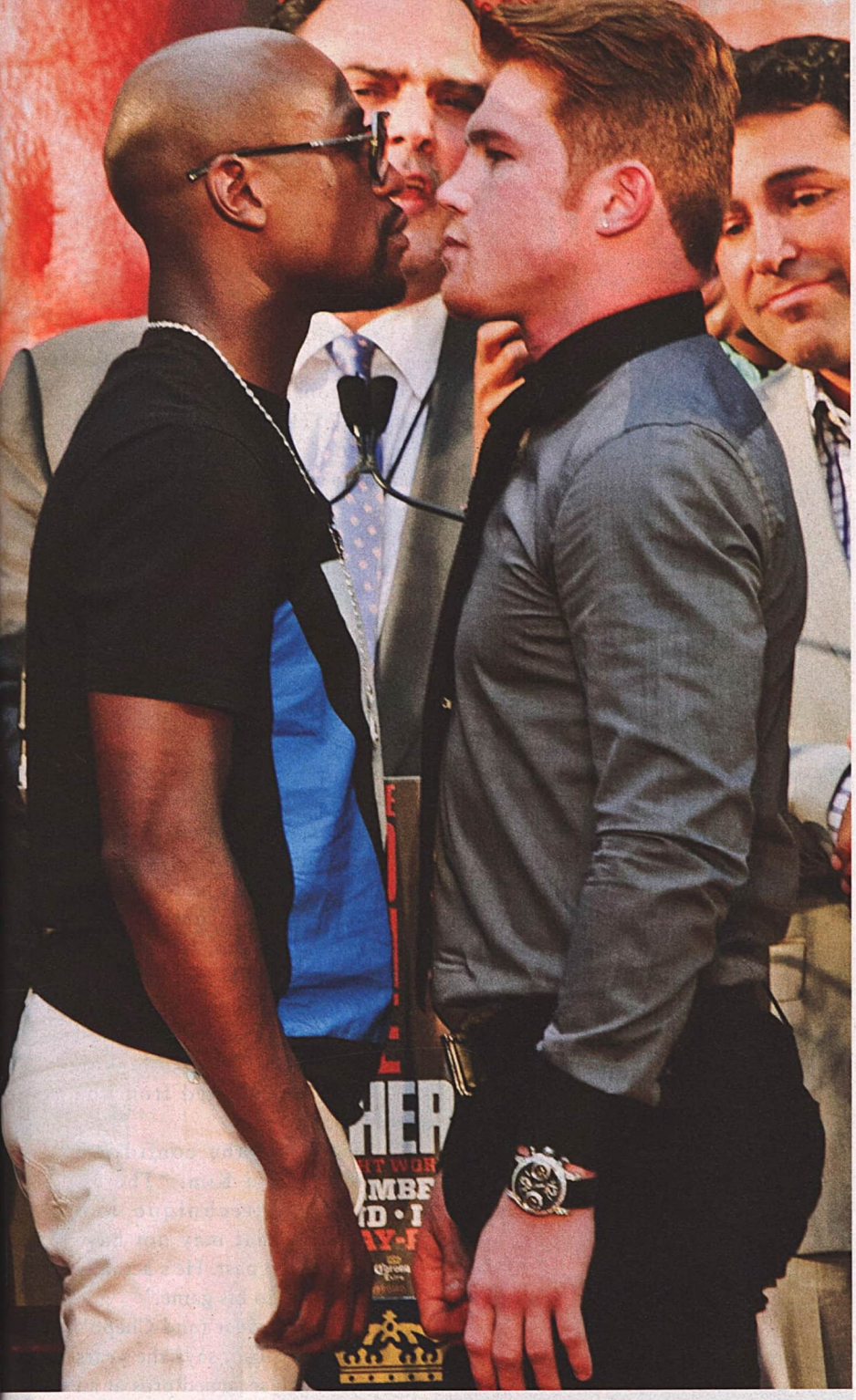
"There is definitely an advantage gained from having so many amateur bouts before turning pro, especially at the high level that Golovkin was at," said John Scully, a former U.S. amateur standout and pro light heavyweight contender.

"Of course, there are guys who were very good amateurs who didn't win world titles and there are guys with limited amateur careers who became all-time greats, like Bernard Hopkins and James Toney. But I don't see it as a coincidence that most of the elite boxers were decorated, if not elite-level amateurs.

"For every Bernard and James, you have dozens of guys on the other end of the spectrum, like Roy Jones Jr., Shane Mosley, Oscar De La Hoya, Evander Holyfield, Mike Tyson, Lennox Lewis, Virgil Hill, Mike McCallum, and on and on. The list is endless. Floyd Mayweather Jr., Zab Judah, Kostya Tszyu, Vernon Forrest, Michael Carbajal, Wladimir Klitschko, Anthony Joshua and literally too many others to list here."

Scully, who has trained amateur and pro boxers after retiring – including former light heavyweight champ Chad Dawson – has a point. Three of the top five on THE RING's pound-for-pound list – Andre Ward (No. 1), Golovkin (No. 2) and Lomachenko (No. 5) – were elite amateurs.

"They become accustomed to so many different styles and sizes and situations as amateurs at that level that when they turn professional they



Golovkin (previous page) was a seasoned fighter when he dismantled Gabriel Rosado in 2013. Canelo (left) was still developing when he lost to Floyd Mayweather Jr. the same year.

have already been tested, especially mentally, on so many different aspects of the game," Scully said.

Abel Sanchez, the veteran trainer who has guided Golovkin's pro development for the past seven years, echoes Scully's opinion when assessing his star fighter's ability to absorb his teachings and having the upper hand against Alvarez.

"Gennady was a guy that I wasn't confusing when I asked him to do something," Sanchez told THE RING. "He already had the foundation, thanks to the Kazakhstani (amateur) system, so it was easy for him to adapt to what I showed him in the gym.

"From his perspective, he can always fall back on that (amateur experience) if what I'm doing with him doesn't work (in the ring).

"It's an advantage over Canelo, not because of skills, but because of situations," Sanchez continued. "Gennady had been in every situation imaginable, he's experienced every style and boxer type – tall guys, short guys, righthanders, lefthanders, movers, punchers – so he can kind of, on the fly, adapt during a fight."

Rudy Hernandez, a former pro boxer who has worked corners for four decades, agrees that amateur experience is important but he believes that instruction a boxer receives in the gym is far more integral to his or her professional development and success.

"Amateur boxing is a great experience for those who want to pursue a professional career," said Hernandez, who trained his brother, Genaro Hernandez, a former two-time junior lightweight titleholder who only had three amateur bouts.

"If professional boxing is something you think you want to do, then you want as much amateur experience as you can get between the ages of 10 and 18. I think it's an advantage for Golovkin having all that amateur experience, but he was also taught right. There must have been some good amateur trainers, maybe from Russia or the old Soviet system, training him in Kazakhstan because he was taught how to punch right.

"There are trainers here in the U.S. at the amateur level who are only as good as the fighters they train. Nobody makes a fighter or makes a fighter good. The fighter has to be born good. A good trainer can make him better."

In other words, Golovkin, a born fighter if ever there was one, was given a solid technical foundation during his amateur upbringing that professional trainers can build on. However, Hernandez says it's clear that Alvarez was also born to fight and he believes the Guadalajara native, who turned pro at 15, received a technical

foundation comparable to Golovkin's during his late teens.

"Canelo didn't have much amateur experience but he grew up in a quality gym and he trained with some really good fighters and he learned his craft," said Hernandez, who sees some similarities between Alvarez and his late brother.

"Genaro only had three amateur bouts, and he lost two of them. But he started boxing when he was 9. He was always in the gym, watching me and other professionals train, sparring with us and learning from us. When Genaro was 15 or 16, he sparred with Azumah Nelson and he did really well. He sparred with Ruben Castillo, the No. 1 junior lightweight in the world at the time, when he was 16."

So while Genaro Hernandez missed having the prolonged amateur career during his teen years that most future pros need to succeed, he gained quality – arguably more valuable – pro experience in the competitive boxing gyms of Los Angeles.

Reynoso recognized that the 14- and 15-year-old Alvarez received better boxing experience in his Guadalajara gym – which was home to two world titleholders, Oscar Larios and Javier Jauregui – than he did in any amateur bout and made the decision to turn his young pupil pro.

"Canelo was sparring with world champions, 'Chololo' Larios, 'Chatito' Jauregui, even once with Marco Antonio Barrera, and doing well by the time he was 15; that's when we knew he was ready to turn pro," Reynoso told THE RING.

Veteran boxing writer David Avila believes Alvarez's precocious beginning is what makes him special.

"Canelo started so young, fighting as an amateur during his pre-teens, but became a pro right away at age 15. And he's been fighting men his whole life," Avila said. "He learned how to fight grown men and he survived. "Nobody beat him until he met Floyd Mayweather Jr. And it took a slick guy to beat him."

Writer and broadcaster Steve Kim, who has followed the careers of Alvarez and Golovkin closely, believes that Alvarez has gotten better since his only loss, the majority decision to Mayweather in 2013, a factor that should be considered going into the Golovkin fight.

"Canelo has evolved and improved since the loss to Mayweather, a fight that he probably wasn't ready for," Kim told THE RING. "But since that point we've seen steady growth, technically and physically."

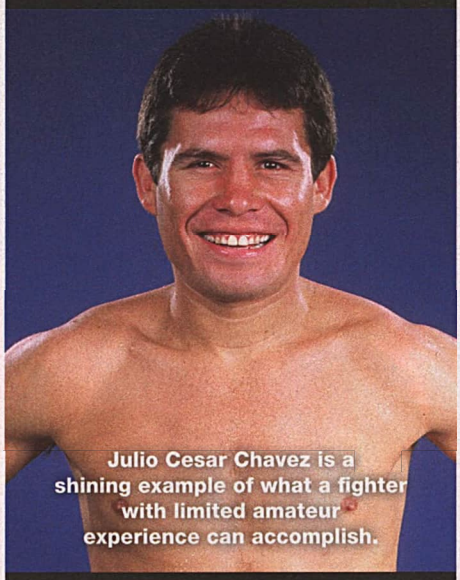
Since the Mayweather setback, Alvarez has won seven consecutive fights, including expected knockouts of limited sluggers Alfredo Angulo, James Kirkland, Liam Smith and the talented but naturally smaller Amir Khan, and a whitewashing of former middleweight beltholder Julio Cesar Chavez Jr.

However, Alvarez's win streak also includes impressive decisions over technical master Erislandy Lara, a former world amateur champ who remains a top junior middleweight titleholder, and future Hall of Famer Miguel Cotto, from whom he lifted THE RING middleweight championship, which put him on a collision course with unified 160-pound beltholder Golovkin. He's clearly benefitted from the quality rounds.

"You can see the confidence he exudes," said Kim. "There's a mastery of technique and fundamentals that may not have been there in the past. He's actually added elements to his game."

Alvarez's co-trainer (and Chepo's son), Eddy Reynoso, says the years of sparring with seasoned pros at an early age and his first 20-30 pro fights basically served as Alvarez's amateur career. The championship fights he's had in recent years have prepared him for arguably his greatest challenge – Golovkin.

"As a team, we have built Canelo since he was 13 years old and to have him at this level, 14 years later, means that we did things right," the younger Reynoso said. "Canelo has defeated great fighters like Cotto, Austin Trout and Lara. But we still have to beat



Julio Cesar Chavez is a shining example of what a fighter with limited amateur experience can accomplish.

LEARNING ON THE JOB

Here are 10 accomplished fighters who proved one can succeed with little to no amateur background.

JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ
Arguably the greatest Mexican fighter

BILLY CONN
Turned pro at only 16 years old

ROBERTO DURAN
Perhaps the best lightweight ever

GEORGE FOREMAN
Won Olympic gold with little experience

GENARO HERNANDEZ
Learned trade in the busy L.A. gyms

LARRY HOLMES
Spent time as Ali's sparring partner

RICARDO LOPEZ
The best little man of his time

ROCKY MARCIANO
Reportedly had only 13 amateur bouts

JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ
One of his era's cleverest boxers

JAMES TONEY
Sublimely skilled underachiever

Fighters generally don't pick up the power Canelo (stopping James Kirkland) and Golovkin (doing the same to Curtis Stevens) have. They're born with it.

fighters like Golovkin who swept through a whole division."

Golovkin does not have future Hall of Famers on his resume as Alvarez does, but he's more accomplished at middleweight, where his title reign has stretched for nearly seven years and during which time he has defeated eight RING-rated contenders (seven by knockout). Even Alvarez's most ardent supporters admit that he will have his hands full with Golovkin.

Which brings us back to the question of whether a fighter with a limited amateur background can be developed into an elite boxer and compete with a former elite amateur. The answer is sometimes, if that fighter is very special.

"Boxing is a very complex game and there is no guaranteed formula for success," Scully said. "Every boxer is an individual and his success will vary by a certain amount of degrees depending on many different factors. The amount of solid amateur experience more often than not plays a role in many ways, but there are also things like professional technique, innate mental toughness, heart and discipline that can be nurtured or cultivated in the gym with great sparring and a very, very astute coach, if not in the amateur ring.

"Every now and then you get a kid with the unusual ability to absorb lessons from a coach, and if he has the physical attributes and the mindset to carry it all out, you make a top fighter out of a guy without many amateur fights. It's obvious that Canelo is one of those guys.

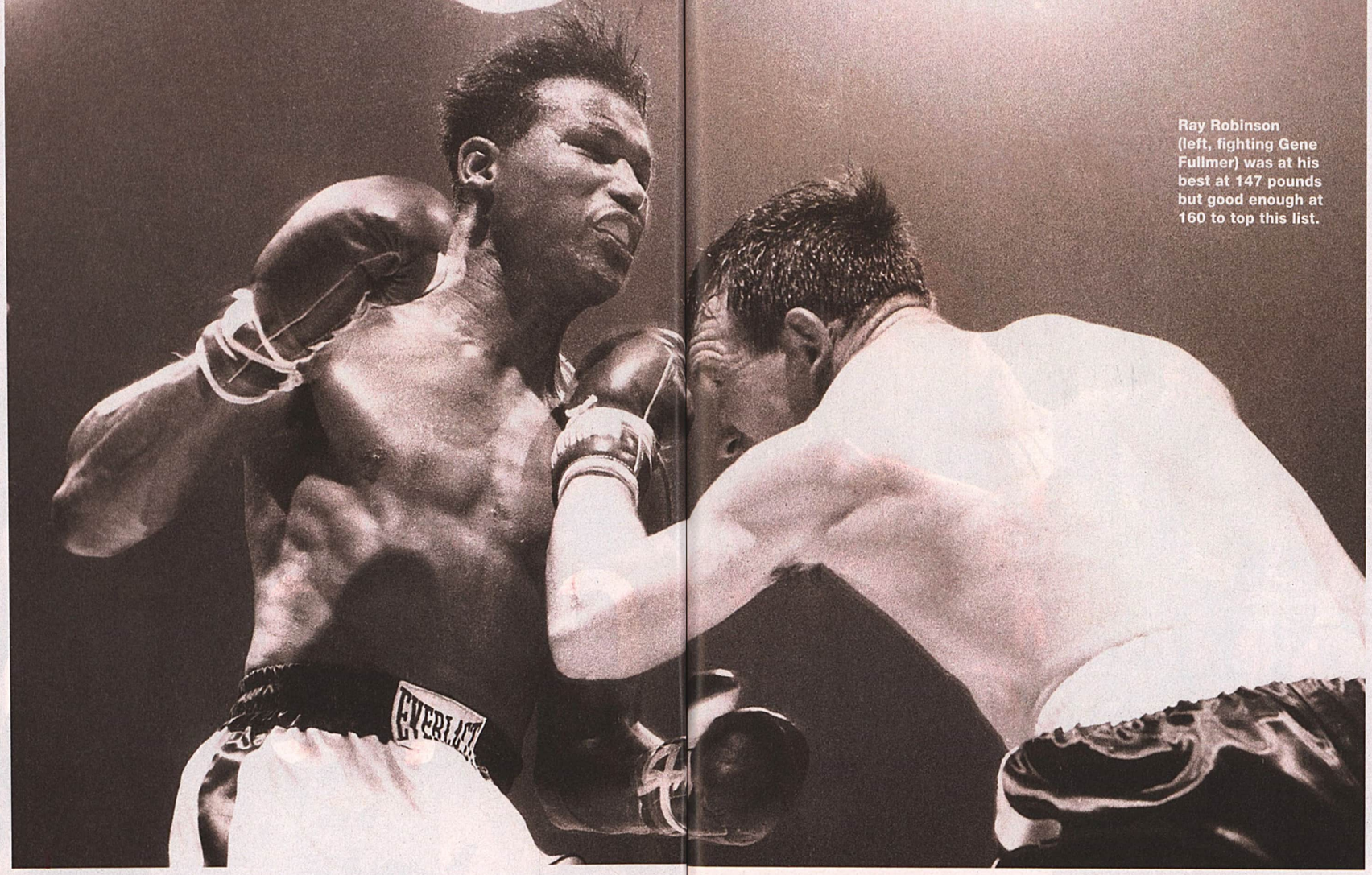
"At the end of the day, some people simply weren't meant to fight for trophies and medals. They were meant to fight for money and pride." RING

MIDDLE GROUND

THE RING RANKS ITS MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPIONS 1-31

By **Tom Gray**

THE RING recognized its first middleweight champ – Marcel Thil (third row from top, fourth from left, on previous page) in 1933 – and has crowned 30 more titleholders since. The championship policy was discontinued in 1990 and resumed in 2002.



Ray Robinson (left, fighting Gene Fullmer) was at his best at 147 pounds but good enough at 160 to top this list.

Over the past 84 years, THE RING has crowned 31 champions at middleweight. Some have been more successful than others in terms of opposition faced and longevity. Some have had single standout victories. Six fighters have won our middleweight championship more than once.

Who was the best? Keep reading.

In this feature, our editorial staff ranks all of our 160-pound champs – from Marcel Thil, the first RING Magazine middleweight titleholder in 1933, to current beltholder Canelo Alvarez, who will defend it against Gennady Golovkin on September 16 – in an exercise we hope will spur debate.

Only one thing is definitive: The day after Canelo faces GGG in the only superfight of 2017, this list will require an immediate reshuffle.

Note: The years the champions held the RING title are included here.

1. SUGAR RAY ROBINSON (1951, 1951-52, 1955-57, 1957, 1958-60)

The original "Sugar Man's" five-way rivalry with Jake LaMotta, Gene Fullmer, Carmen Basilio and Bobo Olson rubberstamped an unmatched legacy at 160 pounds. What's more astonishing is that the five-time middleweight champion peaked at welterweight. For many, the perfect fighter.

2. CARLOS MONZON (1970-77)

The legendary Argentine pressure-puncher is a popular choice for being the greatest middleweight of all time. He won the championship with a 12th-round stoppage of the superb Nino Benvenuti and made 14 successful defenses, nine of which came by knockout.

3. MARVIN HAGLER (1980-87)

This steel-headed southpaw sorcerer decimated an era of middleweights. "The Marvelous One" never shied away from a war but his boxing skills were also superb. Hagler's sensational third-round stoppage of Thomas Hearns in 1985 set the benchmark for middleweight superfights.

4. BERNARD HOPKINS (2001-05)

"The Executioner" was 36 years old when he schooled Felix Trinidad to secure superstar status. Smart, freakishly dedicated and a golden era throwback, this old-school Philadelphia general posted an incredible 19 successful defenses of his IBF title (among others) – a division record.

5. MARCEL CERDAN (1948-1949)

He stopped Tony Zale to win the title in the RING Fight of the Year. The brilliant Cerdan would suffer a shoulder injury in a knockout loss to Jake LaMotta and, just weeks out from a rematch, was tragically killed in an airplane crash.

6. DICK TIGER (1963, 1965-66)

Perennially mistreated by management, Tiger still attained Hall of Fame status. The savvy Nigerian won the championship by defeating Gene Fullmer during a memorable trilogy. He was outpointed by Joey Giardello but avenged that defeat before losing controversially to Emile Griffith.

7. FREDDIE STEELE (1937-1938)

THE RING would recognize Steele as champion after Marcel Thil vacated the title. A solid competitor, hard-hitter and part-time actor, Steele was then shockingly upset by Fred Apostoli in a non-title bout. He refused to defend against Apostoli and was stripped.

8. JAKE LAMOTTA (1949-51)

A deal with the mob, a controversial world title win over Marcel Cerdan, a last-minute victory over Laurent Dauthuille – in a fight he was losing – and a St. Valentine's Day Massacre defeat to Sugar Ray Robinson. No wonder his life became a movie.

9. TONY ZALE (1941-47, 1948)

"Man of Steel" was an apt nickname for one of the most chilling middleweight punchers of all time. Zale outpointed Georgie Abrams to reign supreme but it's the unforgettable trilogy with Rocky Graziano for which he's best remembered.

10. NINO BENVENUTI (1967, 1968-70)

A former lineal junior middleweight champion, the great Benvenuti won his first 65 contests. At 160 pounds, the highly skilled Italian won two of three fights against fellow legend Emile Griffith. He made four successful defenses of his titles before being succeeded by Carlos Monzon.

11. EMILE GRIFFITH (1966-67, 1967-68)

The great three-time welterweight champion spotted middleweight king Dick Tiger 9½ pounds but remarkably became the first fighter to floor the talented Nigerian. Griffith won a hotly contested decision but made up for it with two action-packed reigns at 160 pounds.

12. JOEY GIARDELLO (1963-65)

After a patchy start to his professional career and mob intervention blocking his path to a title shot, Giardello finally broke through. He upset Dick Tiger to win the championship and defended successfully against Rubin "Hurricane" Carter before Tiger claimed revenge.

13. GENE FULLMER (1957)

He fought the fight of his life to outpoint Sugar Ray Robinson for the championship but, just four months later, Robinson took revenge, knocking Fullmer cold with a single left hook. The Utah native took on the best middleweights of his generation.

14. BOBO OLSON (1953-55)

When Ray Robinson retired, Olson picked up the vacant title by outpointing Randy Turpin. Short on finesse but game as they come, the Hawaiian puncher successfully defended three times against quality opposition. Robinson then returned to action and stopped Olson in two rounds.

15. RANDY TURPIN (1951)

When Turpin faced Sugar Ray Robinson for the title, the legendary American's record was 128-1-2 and he hadn't lost in eight years. Turpin's subsequent victory remains arguably the greatest upset ever on U.K. soil. The elusive Englishman was stopped in a direct rematch.

16. CARMEN BASILIO (1957-58)

Following two championship reigns at welterweight, the teak-tough Basilio moved up to middleweight for the ultimate challenge. His upset victory over Sugar Ray Robinson was the performance of a lifetime

Miguel Cotto (left) took the RING championship from Sergio Martinez in 2014.

and he gave his rival absolute hell in a rematch defeat.

17. MARCEL THIL (1932-37)

THE RING's first middleweight champion and, along with Marcel Cerdan, one of France's finest. Thil had defeated Gorilla Jones and Len Harvey when he was awarded the title. He held the title for five years, lost to Fred Apostoli in a non-title bout and then vacated.

18. ROCKY GRAZIANO (1947-48)

A fierce and charismatic knockout artist who won the title by avenging a previous defeat to the great Tony Zale. Graziano was hammered inside three rounds of their rubber match but his toughness and determination are legendary.

19. SUGAR RAY LEONARD (1987)

He only made a cameo appearance at middleweight but it was an Oscar-winning performance. Leonard's 1987 upset of Marvin Hagler is arguably the finest comeback in boxing history. Like his namesake, Sugar Ray Robinson, Leonard was at his best at welterweight.

20. SUMBU KALAMBAY (1988-90)

A wonderful technician, Kalambay had already defeated Iran Barkley, Mike McCallum and Robbie Sims in title fights when he was awarded the RING middleweight championship. His victory over the then-unbeaten McCallum was a near-perfect display of boxing skill.

21. PAUL PENDER (1960-61, 1962-63)

The determined battler defeated a fading Sugar Ray Robinson by a controversial decision to win the title but earned a clear victory in a rematch. He lost his belt to Terry Downes, regained it against Downes nine months later and then retired.

22. TERRY DOWNES (1961-1962)

The tough-as-nails Englishman avenged a stoppage defeat to Paul Pender to win the middleweight championship but lost it immediately in the rubber match. He would have one more big win, against an aging Sugar Ray

Robinson, before moving up to light heavyweight.

23. HUGO CORRO (1978-1979)

A slippery technician who fought in the shadow of countryman and world title predecessor Carlos Monzon. Corro had his moment in the sun when he outpointed Rodrigo Valdez for the title before making two successful defenses in his native Argentina.

24. RODRIGO VALDEZ (1977-78)

The Colombian boxer-puncher would lose two championship fights to Carlos Monzon. Following Monzon's retirement, Valdez captured the vacant undisputed title with a decision win over Philadelphia bomber Bennie Briscoe before being outpointed by Hugo Corro.

25. SERGIO MARTINEZ (2010-2014)

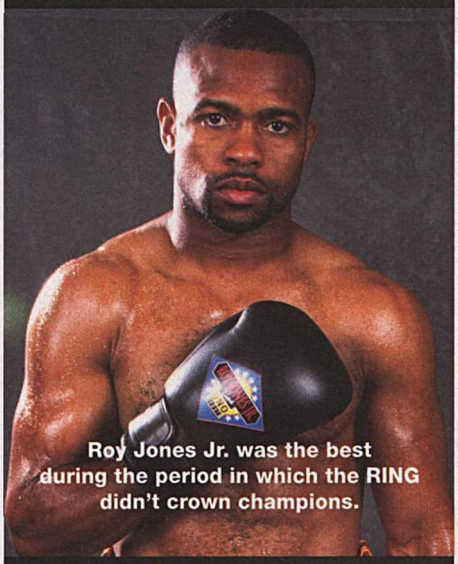
This superb Argentine southpaw sliced up Kelly Pavlik to become champion and then staple-gunned Paul Williams to the canvas with one volcanic left hand to establish middleweight dominance. "Maravilla" was an incredible athlete with lightning reflexes and adept defensive skills.

26. KELLY PAVLIK (2007-10)

The gutsy and hard-hitting 160-pounder from Youngstown, Ohio, got off the canvas to knock out Jermain Taylor in a modern classic. A lack of discipline probably led to a shorter-than-expected title reign but, at his best, Pavlik was an exciting and durable warrior.

27. JERMAIN TAYLOR (2005-07)

The Olympic bronze medalist ended Hopkins' amazing run with a razor-thin points victory and then repeated the result five months later. Athletically gifted with a superb left jab, Taylor was unable to maintain that form during a brief championship reign.



Roy Jones Jr. was the best during the period in which the RING didn't crown champions.

LEFT OUT

The RING championship policy was abandoned when the magazine came under new ownership in 1990 and was reinstated in 2002. During that period, some of the best 160-pounders of that era were at or near their peaks. Here is our ranking of the fighters who were unable to fight for our middleweight championship because of bad timing.

1. Roy Jones Jr.
2. James Toney
3. Mike McCallum
4. Michael Nunn
5. Chris Eubank
6. Nigel Benn
7. Gerald McClellan
8. John David Jackson
9. Jorge Castro
10. Reggie Johnson

Five more (in alphabetical order): Steve Collins, Herol Graham, Keith Holmes, Julian Jackson and Michael Watson.

28. CANELO ALVAREZ (2015-)

In an era of catchweights, Canelo outfought the superb Miguel Cotto at 155 pounds to win the title. The Mexican boxer-puncher has defended once, against Amir Khan, at the same weight and is now preparing for his ultimate test: Gennady Golovkin at 160.

29. MIGUEL COTTO (2014-15)

Three-division world champion targeted middleweight champion Sergio Martinez in a bid to become Puerto Rico's first four-weight king. Aided by Martinez's injured knees, Cotto produced a punch-perfect display to claim a 10th-round stoppage.

30. ALAN MINTER (1980)

A tricky southpaw technician, Minter became Britain's first middleweight champion in 20 years when he outpointed Vito Antuofermo. He repeated the feat by cutting up the former champion in eight rounds but was destroyed by Hagler in his next defense.

31. VITO ANTUOFERMO (1979-80)

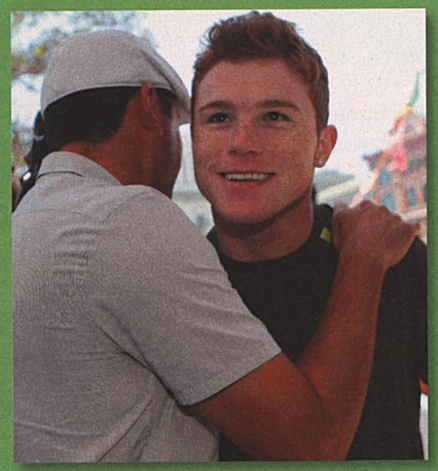
The grizzled and super-tough Italian warrior had an up-and-down championship career. He defeated Hugo Corro on points to win the title but was extremely lucky to retain it against Hagler in a controversial draw. Antuofermo was outpointed by Minter in his next defense.

Tom Gray is a U.K. Correspondent / Editor for THE RING and a member of the RING ratings panel. Follow him on Twitter: @Tom_Gray_Boxing

THE ROAD TO CANELO-GGG

HOW THE RIVALS' PATHS CONVERGED

By **Michael Rosenthal**



CANELO

July 18, 1990
Canelo is born in Guadalajara, Mexico.

Feb. 1, 2000
Reportedly becomes interested in boxing after watching brother Rigoberto make his pro debut in nearby Ciudad Guzman. All seven Alvarez brothers box.

2005
Concludes a brief amateur career by winning the gold medal at the Junior Mexican National Championships.

Jan. 20, 2006
Outpoints future lightweight titleholder and fellow Tapatio Miguel Vazquez, who would lose to Canelo again two years later.

June 17, 2006
Fails to win a pro fight for the first time, drawing with Jorge Juarez in Tijuana.

Oct. 24, 2008
Fights for the first time outside Mexico and in the U.S., easily outpointing Larry Mosley in Cabazon, California.

Jan. 22, 2010
Signs a multifight contract with Oscar De La Hoya's Golden Boy Promotions, which had promoted two of his previous fights. He's only 19.

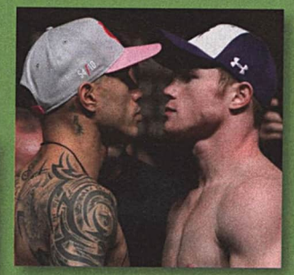
May 1, 2010
Fights for the first time in Las Vegas – on the undercard of Floyd Mayweather Jr.-Shane Mosley at the MGM Grand – and stops Jose Cotto in nine rounds.

March 5, 2011
Nearly shuts out Matthew Hatton to win his first major title – WBC junior middleweight – at the Honda Center in Anaheim, California.

April 20, 2013
Defeats Austin Trout (below) by a unanimous decision in the biggest challenge of his career to that point with nearly 40,000 in attendance at the Alamodome in San Antonio.

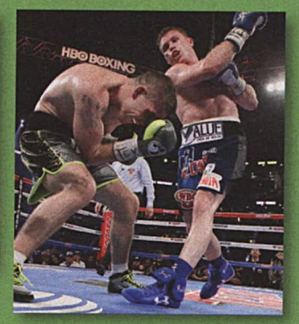
Sept. 14, 2013
Endures a humbling loss – but also a learning experience – against Mayweather, who dominates him in every way.

July 12, 2014
Takes a fight some in his camp wanted to avoid and narrowly outpoints slick Cuban Erislandy Lara in Las Vegas.



Nov. 21, 2015
Defeats future Hall of Famer Miguel Cotto (above) by a unanimous decision to win the RING and WBC middleweight titles in Las Vegas. They agreed to a 155-pound catchweight.

May 2016
Gives up his WBC title rather than meet the WBC's deadline to make a fight with mandatory challenger Gennady Golovkin. Some accuse him of ducking GGG.



Sept. 17, 2016
Stops overmatched Liam Smith (above) in nine rounds to win the WBO junior middleweight title before around 52,000 at AT&T Stadium outside Dallas.

May 6, 2017
Announces immediately after embarrassing Mexican rival Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. that he'll fight Golovkin on September 16.

1982 **1990** **2000** **2003** **2004** **2005** **2006** **2008** **2010** **2011** **2013** **2014** **2015** **2016** **2017**

GGG

April 8, 1982
Golovkin and twin brother Max are born in Karaganda, Kazakhstan, then a part of the Soviet Union.

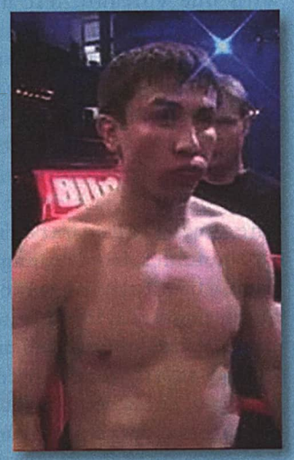
1990
Golovkin's older brothers, Sergey and Vadim, reportedly lead Gennady and Max into boxing around this time.

Nov. 12, 2000
Defeats Cuban Maikel Perez to win the junior welterweight gold medal in the World Junior Championships in Budapest, Hungary.

July 12, 2003
Defeats Oleg Mashkin to win the middleweight gold medal in the World Championships in Bangkok, Thailand.

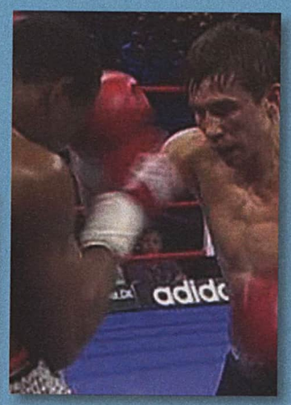
Aug. 28, 2004
Loses to Gaydarbek Gaydarbekov (below, second from left) in the gold medal match in the Olympics in Athens, Greece.

Nov. 16, 2005
Upset by Mohamed Hikal in the preliminary rounds of the World Championships in Mianyang, China. His final amateur record often is listed at 345-5 but some sources show at least eight losses.



2005
Signs a contract with German-based promoter Universum and makes his pro debut (above) on May 6, 2006, stopping Gabor Balogh in one round in Dusseldorf, Germany.

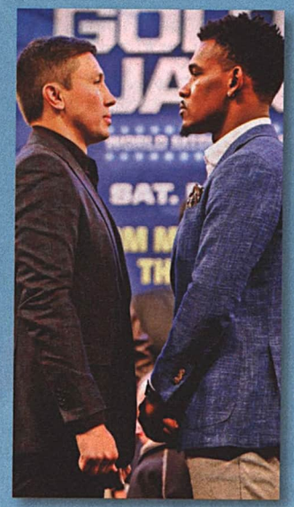
2010
Sues to get out of his contract with Universum, which he says failed to pursue the fights he wanted. Aligns himself with the Klitschko brothers' K2 Promotions.



Aug. 14, 2010
Stops Milton Nunez in only 58 seconds (above) to become the "interim" WBA middleweight titleholder, the sixth in what would be 23 consecutive KOs. Became full titleholder on Nov. 1, 2012, when Daniel Geale was stripped for not fighting him.

Oct. 18, 2014
Knocks out Marco Antonio Rubio in two rounds to win the "interim" WBC middleweight title. Elevated to full beltholder on May 18, 2016, after Canelo vacates the title.

March 18, 2017
Overcomes the biggest challenge of his career by narrowly outpointing Danny Jacobs (below) in New York City.



May 6, 2017
Is present when Canelo announces in the ring after beating Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. that he'll fight Golovkin next.

CANELO-2010: DAMIAN DOVARGAS/AP; 2013: ERIC GAY/AP; 2016: LM OTERO. GGG-2004: RICK BOWMER. 2010: JORDAN MANFIELD. MARCH 2017: BEBETO MATTHEWS. MAY 2017: ERIC VERDUZCO

A 50-50 FIGHT

HEAD-TO-HEAD ANALYSIS

By **Tom Gray**

Gennady Golovkin (top) and Canelo Alvarez (bottom right) have ability but can also overwhelm opponents with their fury.

When the Floyd Mayweather Jr.-Manny Pacquiao superfight was made for May 2015 in Las Vegas, there was a feeling that it had been overcooked. In fact, after a six-year wait, it had been all but cremated and the ashes scattered. Mayweather's subsequent unanimous-decision victory was masterful but as boring as a tumbleweed rolling mournfully across the Nevada desert.

This one feels different, despite the wait.

On September 16, 2017, Canelo Alvarez, the RING middleweight champion, and Gennady Golovkin, the IBF, WBA and WBC titleholder, will finally square off at T-Mobile Arena in what is likely to be the complete antithesis of Mayweather-Pacquiao. Indeed, this encounter should produce enough electricity to light up the Las Vegas Strip.

Both men love to fight. Canelo brings pure Mexican machismo, an explosive all-action style and quick fists to battle. Golovkin, equally skilled, is a seek-and-destroy force of nature who can cause mass destruction with a single power shot from either hand. When the bell sounds, the boxing world will find out who has the superior weaponry.

The timing of the fight is also perfect. Three years ago, Canelo was a work in progress with bags of potential. He had been easily outpointed by Mayweather in September 2013 but used that setback as motivation to improve. Since that time, the redhead has displayed his boxing acumen in decision wins over brilliant fighters like Erislandy Lara and Miguel Cotto.

Golovkin has been boxing's boogeyman for several years. Contender after contender fell before the fearsome Kazakhstani and, with each passing knockout, the "invincible" tag looked more and more justified. And it wasn't just the punching power. Golovkin pursued his victims like an indestructible villain in a horror movie, and there was no escape

Enter Daniel Jacobs.

In March, "The Miracle Man" lived up to his nickname by absorbing Golovkin's best bombs while giving the long-reigning champion hell over 12 rounds. Jacobs lost a narrow unanimous decision on the scorecards but Golovkin's incredible knockout streak was snapped at 23 and suddenly the monster-man looked mortal.

Canelo doesn't fight anything like Jacobs. He does not have Jacobs' natural size, his lateral movement or his ability to switch-hit. However, the Mexican is nine years Golovkin's junior with a superb skillset of his own. Can he outfox the older man and punch hard enough to keep him honest? Will Golovkin's superior pedigree and power prove too much? Those questions will be answered on September 16.

In this feature, THE RING analyzed the strengths and weaknesses of both men by applying scores between 0-5 in key areas. »

THE KEYS

HANDSPEED
Canelo has very quick fists and releases strong combinations when an opponent is trapped against the ropes. Golovkin is more about timing than speed, although he is far from slow.
CANELO ★★★★
GOLOVKIN ★★★½

ENDURANCE
Two very durable athletes. Julio Cesar Chavez Jr., at 164.5 pounds, couldn't slow Canelo down in May. Jacobs landed plenty of shots on Golovkin, who maintained his poise through 12 hard rounds.
CANELO ★★★★
GOLOVKIN ★★★★

FOOTWORK
Both men are aggressive and movement is not a priority. However, Golovkin is brilliant at cutting off the ring and can create panic without throwing a punch. Canelo is very adept at using his feet to position himself for counterpunching opportunities.
CANELO ★★★★
GOLOVKIN ★★★★½

POWER (LEAD HAND)
Golovkin has 33 knockouts in 37 wins. That's an 89 percent knockout ratio, and that power is evenly distributed in both hands. Canelo can punch but cannot match GGG. No middleweight can.
CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★★

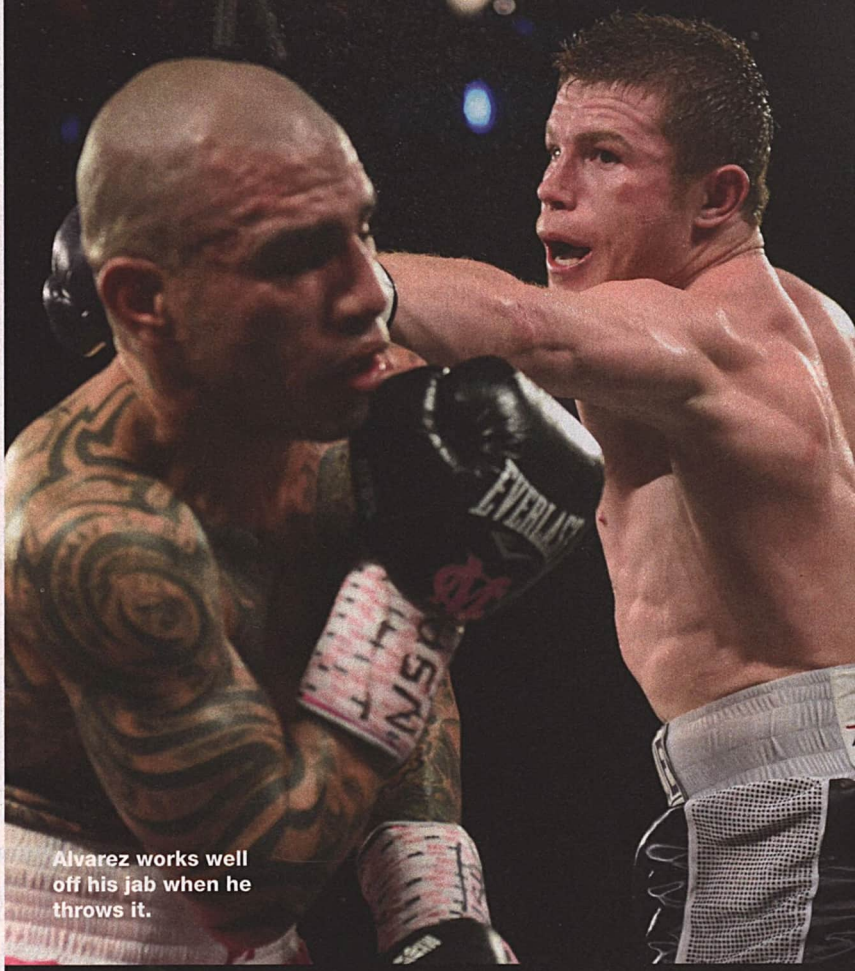
POWER (TRAIL HAND)
See POWER (LEAD HAND)
CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★★

JAB
Golovkin uses the jab to set up crushing combinations, and he can also use it to keep powerful fighters at bay, as evidenced in his bout with David Lemieux. Canelo works well off a strong jab, but Golovkin is more adept at controlling distance with that shot.
CANELO ★★★★
GOLOVKIN ★★★★★

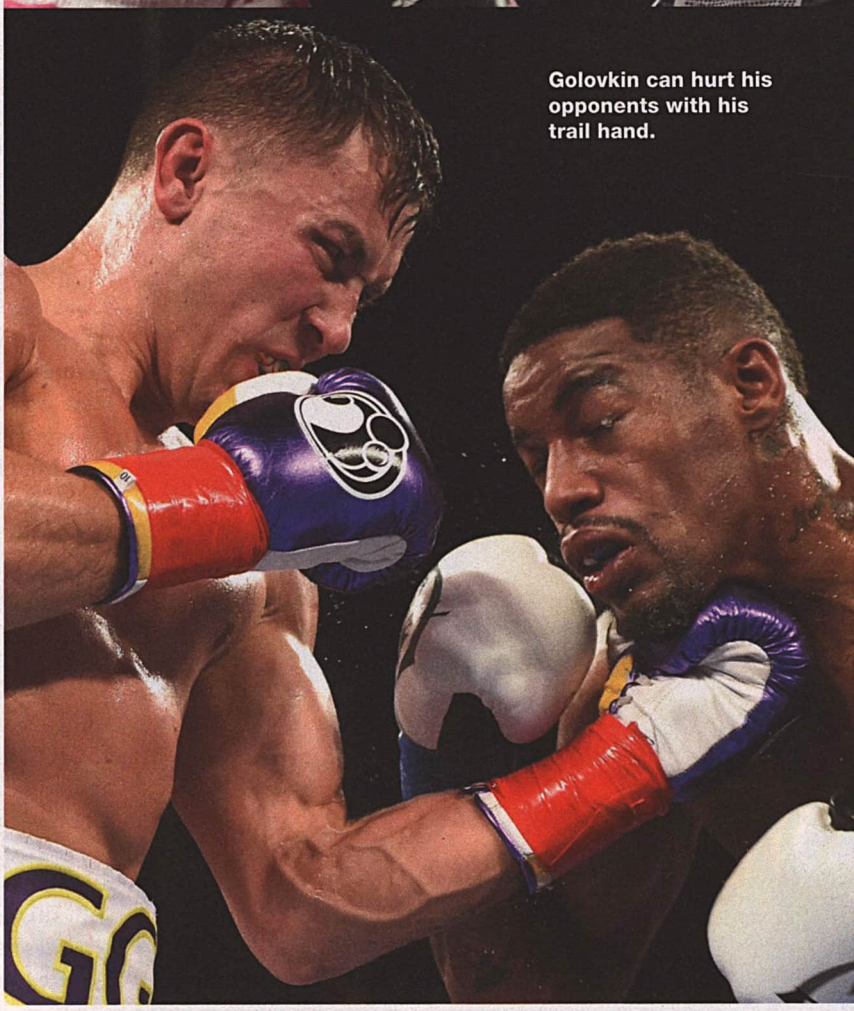
HOOK
Both fighters have terrific technique on the hook – with either hand.
CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★½

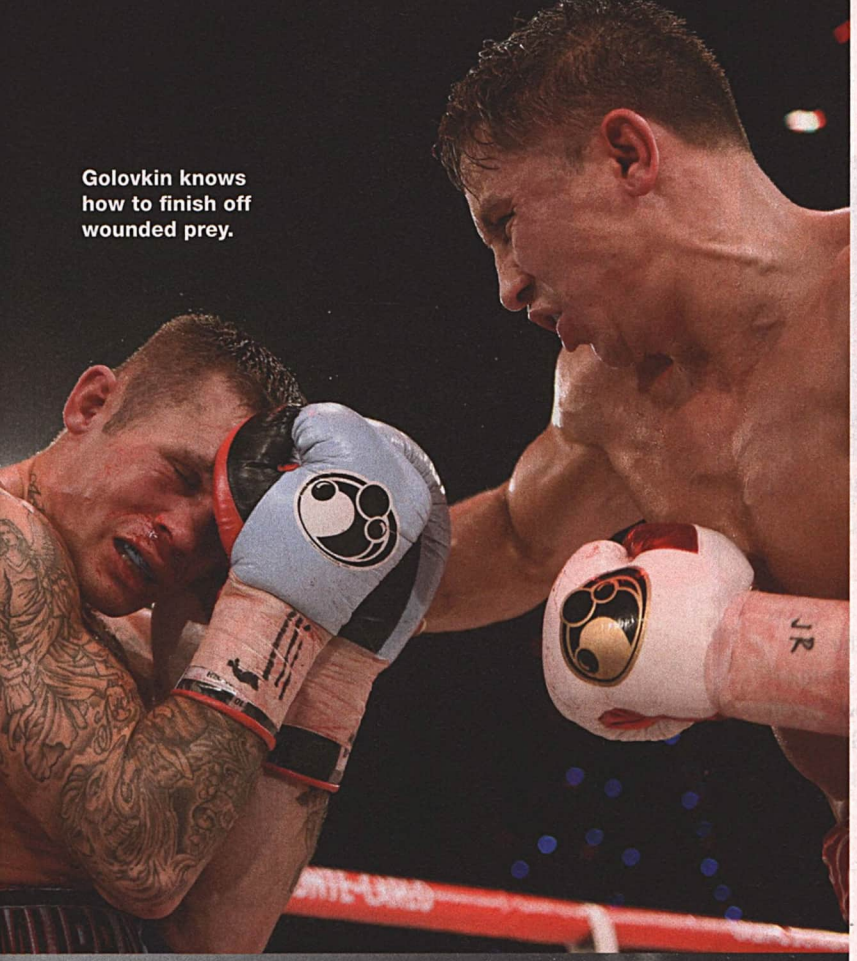
ABILITY TO SLIP AND BLOCK
Canelo's defensive timing has improved dramatically. His head movement against Miguel Cotto was very impressive and allowed him to set up terrific counterpunches against an elite opponent. Golovkin is easier to hit and has the tendency to back off in straight lines.
CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★½

PHYSICAL CONDITION
Canelo, at 26 years old, is at the absolute peak of his physical conditioning. Golovkin is 35 but he is superbly trained and a quality athlete.
CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★½

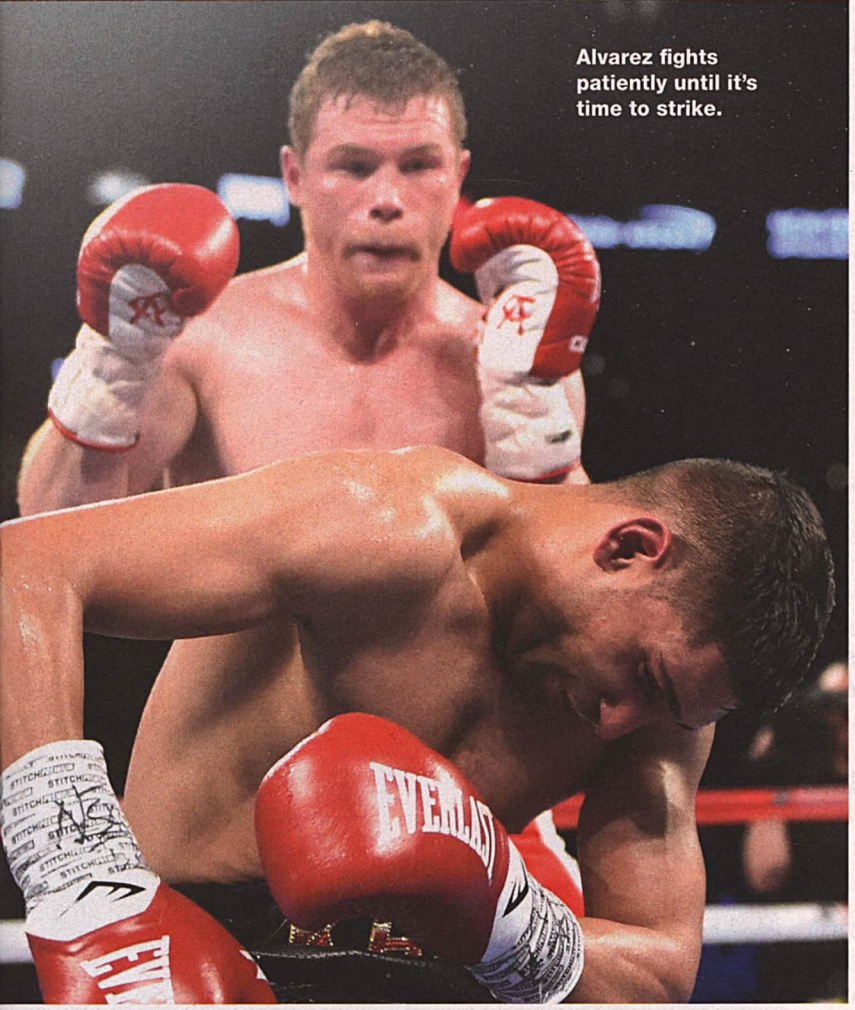


Alvarez works well off his jab when he throws it.


Golovkin can hurt his opponents with his trail hand.



Golovkin knows how to finish off wounded prey.



Alvarez fights patiently until it's time to strike.

POISE AND ABILITY TO COPE WITH EXTERNAL PRESSURES

Both fighters are superb professionals. Canelo's mental strength belies his years and his ability to improve following the defeat to Mayweather has been impressive. Golovkin is all business.

CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★½

KILLER INSTINCT

If either of these champions has you on the hook, don't make any plans. The slightest sign of weakness will be ruthlessly exploited. No mercy.

CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★★

INTELLIGENCE AND STRATEGIC DEXTERITY

Although there has been significant improvement in is overall game, Canelo had no idea how to cope with Mayweather. There was no significant change in his game plan across 12 one-sided rounds. Golovkin struggled with Jacobs in the second half of their fight and came close to losing.

CANELO ★★★★
GOLOVKIN ★★★★

EXPERIENCE

Canelo has mixed with the better opposition as a professional but Golovkin's amateur pedigree and long title reign make up for that.

CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★½

BODY PUNCHING

Golovkin cracked two of Matthew Macklin's ribs with a single left hook to the body. Canelo almost broke Liam Smith in half with the same shot. Body snatchers of the highest quality.

CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★½

INFIGHTING SKILLS

If you have any sense, you shouldn't be inside with Golovkin. For that reason, he rarely gets a chance to display his infighting skills. This is also not an area of strength for Canelo, who enjoys long and mid-range combat.

CANELO ★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★½

QUALITY OF OPPONENTS

Canelo, despite being a lot younger, has better names on his resume. Shane Mosley, Mayweather, Cotto, Lara and Austin Trout trump Jacobs, Lemieux, Martin Murray, Kell Brook and Willie Monroe Jr.

CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★½

CHIN AND RESILIENCE

Canelo takes punishment very well. When the much bigger Chavez Jr. did manage to land a punch, it had zero impact. Golovkin took his licks against Jacobs and showed no ill effects.

CANELO ★★★★
GOLOVKIN ★★★★½

HEAD-TO-HEAD ANALYSIS

CROSS/UPPERCUT Canelo's cross is a quickly loaded and powerful punch, and his uppercuts, particularly on the counter, are terrific. Golovkin's cross, as you would expect, is lethal but the edge on the uppercut goes to the younger man.
CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★½

ATHLETICISM
Canelo appears to have superior hand speed and relies on razor-sharp reflexes for defense. Golovkin makes up for any deficiencies in those departments with anticipation and timing.
CANELO ★★★★
GOLOVKIN ★★★½

CORNER
Eddy Reynoso has developed Canelo brilliantly over the last three years or so. The emphasis on defense and sharp counterpunching has worked wonders in the ring. Abel Sanchez is beyond reproach as a coach, and his record with Golovkin speaks for itself.
CANELO ★★★★½
GOLOVKIN ★★★★½

TOTALS:

ALVAREZ:
85½
(single category average: 4.28)

GOLOVKIN:
86
(single category average: 4.30)

SUMMARY AND PREDICTION
So the 20-category analysis favors Golovkin, although the difference is negligible. My prediction goes against the numbers which, although frustrating in terms of continuity, is explainable. The categories that I view as vital involve youth, athleticism, speed, reflexes and durability. If Alvarez can make Golovkin miss and make him pay, then he stands a chance of slowing the middleweight juggernaut's forward momentum. Canelo doesn't need to neutralize Golovkin's aggression completely, but he must break it up and find opportunities to score. Attacking the body of the older man would make sense and it is imperative that Canelo use his powerful combinations to exact a toll as the rounds go by. The one caveat I must add is that Canelo has to make a physical impression. If Golovkin can walk through a fighter's best assaults, then defeating GGG is practically impossible

CANELO ALVAREZ
UD 12

RING analyst Tom Gray believes Alvarez will defeat Golovkin by a close, but unanimous decision.

RING EXPERTS' PREDICTIONS
CANELO ALVAREZ VS. GENNADY GOLOVKIN
SEPTEMBER 16, LAS VEGAS (PPV)

NAME	ALVAREZ	GOLOVKIN	RESULT
Doug Fischer		✓	UD
Michael Rosenthal		✓	KO 10
Brian Harty		✓	SD
Mike Coppinger	✓		SD
Tom Gray	✓		UD
Ron Borges	✓		UD
Norm Frauenheim		✓	SD
Gareth A. Davies	✓		MD
Tom Gerbasi		✓	KO 9
Ryan Songalia		✓	UD
Martin Mulcahey		✓	UD
Lee Groves		✓	UD
Anson Wainwright		✓	SD
Michael Woods		✓	UD
Joseph Santoliquito		✓	KO 10
TOTAL	4	11	

Tom Gray is a U.K. correspondent and editor for THE RING and a member of the RING Ratings Panel. Follow him on Twitter: @Tom_Gray_Boxing

THE BUSINESS OF MAYWEATHER VS. MCGREGOR

HOW A FIGHT THAT MOST PEOPLE BELIEVE IS FARCICAL COULD BREAK ALL REVENUE RECORDS

By **Mike Coppinger**

The prop Floyd Mayweather Jr. used during the media tour left no doubt about who he is and what motivated him to fight Conor McGregor.

Dollar bills fell from the sky as Conor McGregor sat in a chair and soaked it all in. The green-and-white currency, emblazoned with the face of George Washington, showered the UFC star during a chaotic scene on the third stop of the Floyd Mayweather-Conor McGregor world tour.

"They're all ones!" McGregor exclaimed in mockery.

Well, soon enough they won't be counting one by one. They won't be counting the cash by the thousands or even millions. No, in the end, they'll be sifting through *hundreds* of millions of dollars.

Indeed, the junior middleweight matchup isn't really about boxing – or competition – at all. This is a spectacle, an event in which global fascination could allow it to surpass Mayweather-Manny Pacquiao and become the richest fight in history.

Mayweather-McGregor has taken over social

Mayweather and McGregor seemed to enjoy the promotional tour. And why not? Their antics will have helped them make a fortune.

media and dominated water-cooler chatter from the moment the August 26 event was officially announced on June 14, peaking during the wild press tour that made stops in four cities in three different countries.

It was at the Brooklyn stop, at Barclays Center, where Mayweather "made it rain" on McGregor. More than 13,000 people packed the arena – fans at each stop had to obtain free tickets – as the fighters hurled bombastic insults at one another. There were even more people in attendance in Los Angeles, Toronto and London.

News conferences are usually closed to the public. And if they happen to allow fans in, you might see a handful. The Mayweather-McGregor promotional events drew legions mesmerized by what they seem to see as the ultimate showdown.

And, according to estimates, tens of millions watched the news conferences live on various platforms.

There's no question: No matter what you think of it, this event is truly larger than life.

Mayweather-McGregor has captured the imagination of just about everyone. A large number of boxing fans will tune in to watch their man. The event will have the distinction of doing the same from a second sport, mixed martial arts, in which McGregor made his name. And one can assume that even those unfamiliar with combat sports will be intrigued enough to fork over the money to watch.

Remember: Mayweather and McGregor are both the most recognizable figures in their sports and worldwide personalities. And, on top of that, they're two of the best trash-talkers in any sport.

All this adds up to a money-making bonanza.

But just how much cash does everyone involved – from Showtime Sports, which will broadcast the fight on pay-per-view, to the UFC, to the fighters themselves – stand to make?

ESTHER LIN/SHOWTIME

Making such projections for an event of this magnitude is an inexact science, particularly because McGregor is coming from another sport. This is unprecedented.

Former HBO Sports pay-per-view czar Mark Taffet, who worked at the network for 30 years and oversaw the promotion of 190 PPV shows, told THE RING he was shocked when Mayweather-Pacquiao shattered the previous record of 2.8 million buys of Mayweather-Oscar De La Hoya by generating an unfathomable number: 4.6 million.

Two years later, it appears "Money" Mayweather is poised to top himself yet again.

"There are pay-per-view boxing matches and then there are pay-per-view megafights. The megafights take on a characteristic all their own," Taffet said. "You can do a million buys with a great pay-per-view boxing match. But when you start doing ... 2 million or more buys, you transcend the sport and get into bigger and bigger circles, from sports fans to every fan.

"The more an event is a news item, the more the event is a spectacle, the bigger the buys go. It tends to grow astronomically when you get beyond the boxing circle."

The bulk of the revenue will come from U.S. pay-per-view – Taffet estimates 75 percent of worldwide income – with site revenue the second-largest moneymaker. After that, it's a toss-up between foreign revenue, closed circuit, merchandise and sponsorships.

Showtime Sports is charging what it did for Mayweather-Pacquiao: $99.95 for high definition, $89.95 for standard definition. That bout generated $455 million in American pay-per-view revenue, a staggering figure but one many people believe Mayweather-McGregor will exceed.

Mayweather-Pacquiao built momentum for five-plus years. Mayweather-McGregor rocketed into the ozone immediately and continues to rise. And we presume MMA fans didn't buy into Mayweather-Pacquiao to the same extent they will for this one.

"The level of excitement and energy coming from the UFC fan base has been a bit surprising," said Courtney Brunious, associate director at the USC Sports Business Institute. "Not only do they believe McGregor has the opportunity to win the fight, but they've also shown up en masse to support him.

"I think that underscores the success UFC has had in developing the sport and why this fight has generated so much interest and potential revenue. Traditional boxing fans may be interested enough to watch the fight, but they aren't the ones generating the momentum toward fight day."

Indeed, McGregor is a massive underdog in the minds of everyone but MMA fans, who feverishly believe in the Irishman. McGregor clearly had more support at every stop on the tour, especially in Canada and England, where he led expletive-laden chants deriding the Mayweather family.

Mayweather is known as the king of pay-per-view but, to be clear, McGregor has also done well as the "A side" in such events. His last four bouts all have sold at least 1.2 million pay-per-views stateside. And his star has only grown brighter since the announcement he'd fight Mayweather.

Taffet suggested that "adding a completely new sport to the mix with a completely complementary demographic not just to Mayweather, but to boxing" could lend itself to unprecedented business.

How high could the pay-per-view numbers go? Six million buys? Seven million? Nothing seems out of reach.

"I'm a student and I use models to predict, but this event is outside the norm of any model," Taffet said. "It's a cultural phenomenon that stands to set records. ... Just like Mayweather-Pacquiao exceeded De La Hoya by unfathomable amounts, Mayweather-McGregor could set a completely new high bar because of its totally unique character, unlike anything before or anything after.

"There's no pay-per-view figure that would surprise me because I think of it more in terms of television viewership numbers than pay-per-view buys. It leads me to believe it has the potential to reach unforeseen levels."

There's plenty more money where that came from, too.

Tickets went on sale on July 24. And to buy a seat or two (but no more) at T-Mobile Arena, you needed a Ticketmaster code. Those special passwords alone were fetching up to $100 on the secondary market.

And, of course, tickets weren't cheap. You could sit in the rafters for $500 (face value). Then, as you move closer, tickets would cost $1,500, $2,500, $3,500, $5,000 and $7,500. The best ringside seats were sold for $10,000.

Mayweather-McGregor is sure to top Mayweather-Pacquiao in terms of site revenue for one simple reason: T-Mobile Arena holds more seats than the MGM Grand Garden Arena, where the earlier fight took place.

MGM's new flagship venue, which opened in April 2016, has a capacity of 20,000 for boxing. MGM Grand holds between 16,000 and 17,000.

Mayweather-Pacquiao reeled in $79.1 million in ticket sales (16,219 sold), another record. Of course, there will be comps, but Mayweather-McGregor will surely sell more seats at similar face-value prices.

Yes, a lot of people will have paid a lot of money to witness the event in person. And not all of them will be experts in combat sports.

"We're not only drawing fans from the universe of boxing and MMA, we've tapped into the audience that really doesn't follow either sport," said Stephen Espinoza, executive vice president and general manager of Showtime Sports.

"This is such an unprecedented event, such a spectacle, that suddenly people who have never really been interested in either MMA or boxing are interested in this event due to the

nature of the competition and the nature of these two personalities. That's an untapped part of the market that not even Mayweather-Pacquiao touched."

Then there's the foreign money. Mayweather-McGregor should win that battle as well. Consider that McGregor hails from Ireland and is massively popular throughout the United Kingdom, while Pacquiao had the Philippines – where fans could watch his fight with Mayweather on free TV – and some parts of Asia.

Boxing-crazed fans in the U.K. have demonstrated repeatedly that they'll pay to watch the biggest fights. British heavyweight Anthony Joshua is already drawing PPV numbers there that rival those of American shows.

Merchandising could be where this fight really crushes Mayweather-Pacquiao even though it will be a fraction of total profits.

Mayweather was mocked by McGregor for not wearing a suit at their various press conference stops, but Mayweather laughed. "I made a strategic decision to wear my brand on this tour," he said.

And sure enough, TMT (The Money Team) merchandise could be found at various stands at Barclays Center. So, too, could McGregor merchandise and other UFC apparel. The massive appeal of the UFC alone could push merchandise revenue past the $1 million in sales for Mayweather-Pacquiao.

Closed-circuit sales are much more difficult to project. It constitutes any restaurant, bar or establishment that pays a premium fee to televise the fight.

Promoters typically determine a price for the establishment to acquire the rights based on the size of the location. Larger venues dole out larger fees.

Then, of course, there are designated closed-circuit locations in Las Vegas that will host large parties for fans who travel to Sin City but are frozen out from seeing

STREAMS OF REVENUE

Where the money generated by the Floyd Mayweather Jr.-Conor McGregor fight will come from (in order of possible dollar amount).

U.S. PAY PER VIEW

$500 million? – The Mayweather-Manny Pacquiao fight drew a record-smashing 4.6 million buys (at $99.95 and $89.95 per buy) and generated a reported $455 million. Mayweather-McGregor is expected by many to exceed that.

LIVE GATE

$90 million? – Mayweather-Pacquiao did $79.1 million in ticket sales alone, which should be eclipsed by Mayweather-McGregor in part because T-Mobile Arena, the site of this fight, is much bigger than the site of the earlier fight.

FOREIGN TV

$50 million? – Foreign TV revenue is difficult to estimate because of different deals with every country, but experts suggested the total could range from $40 million to $50 million.

SPONSORSHIPS

$12 million? – Mayweather-Pacquiao had $13.2 million in sponsorships, according to ESPN.com. The Mayweather-McGregor total could be less than Mayweather-Pacquiao because of the relatively short period between the date the fight was announced and the fight itself.

CLOSED CIRCUIT

$10 million? – One expert suggested closed-circuit revenues could approach $8 million to $10 million. Fans can watch the fight on closed-circuit TV at some bars and restaurants, as well as various locations in Las Vegas.

MERCHANDISE

$2 million? – Merchandise – T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, etc. – will have been sold throughout the promotion, at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, at the arena on fight night and in other locations. The combination of boxing and UFC fans could push this revenue total to new heights.

TOTAL

$664 million? – The figures in this chart are only estimates – educated projections based on past fights and the comments of experts – but they give you an idea of the immense earning power of Mayweather-McGregor.

Note: Of course, the revenues are gross profits. Many people must be paid from that income. For example, the companies that distribute the telecast generally take half of the pay-per-view total. Also, the fighters get their share of the profits or a flat fee. And everyone else involved in the promotion must receive their share. Those numbers are very difficult to estimate because they are determined by individual contracts.

PAY-PER-VIEW STRATOSPHERE

The highest pay-per-view buyrates.

1. **4.6 million** – Floyd Mayweather Jr. vs. Manny Pacquiao, May 2, 2015
2. **2.4 million** – Mayweather vs. Oscar De La Hoya, May 5, 2007
3. **2.2 million** – Mayweather vs. Canelo Alvarez, Sept. 14, 2013
4. **1.99 million** – Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson II, June 28, 1997
5. **1.97 million** – Lennox Lewis vs. Tyson, June 8, 2002
6. **1.59 million** – Holyfield vs. Tyson I, Nov. 9, 1996
7. **1.55 million** – Tyson vs. Peter McNeeley, Aug. 19, 1995
8. **1.5 million** – Mayweather vs. Miguel Cotto, May 5, 2012

9T. **1.4 million** – Felix Trinidad vs. De La Hoya, Sept. 18, 1999

9T. **1.4 million** – Holyfield vs. George Foreman, April 19, 1991

9T. **1.4 million** – Mayweather vs. Shane Mosley, May 1, 2010

9T. **1.4 million** – Pacquiao vs. Juan Manuel Marquez III, Nov. 12, 2011

The fighters will be seeing a lot more green before all this is finished.

the fight in person because they acted too slowly or couldn't afford the exorbitant prices.

"During my tenure, we found that closed circuit was complementary, not competitive, to pay-per-view," Taffet said. "People who wanted to stay home and have family and friends over with large-screen TVs and great sound made their Super Bowl-like parties. People who wanted larger crowds and wanted a different experience chose closed circuit."

How will piracy be combated? It's easier than ever to watch a marquee fight without paying a dollar. It's illegal, naturally, but platforms like Facebook Live and a plethora of black-market websites offer grainy streams of every pay-per-view event, no matter the country of origin. Sometimes those streams are pretty good quality.

Taffet doesn't foresee piracy being a major issue here, though.

"Those who choose to go that way are not real buyers anyway," he said. "And for an event like this people could be talking about for many, many years, to know you'll have the best high-definition signal, the best sound, a superior TV environment – those factors will rule the day."

Sponsorship should be yet another area where Mayweather-McGregor breaks new ground.

According to ESPN.com, five sponsors paid $13.2 million for Mayweather-Pacquiao, led by Tecate at $5.6 million. Other sponsors included films "Terminator Genisys," "Mission: Impossible – Rogue Nation" and "Southpaw."

The same website reported that talent agency WME-IMG, which owns the UFC, sent a proposal to potential suitors seeking $10 million to be the title sponsor for Mayweather-McGregor.

The top sponsor would see its logo at center ring, its branding on two of the ropes, on ring girls and in the two corners of the ring not occupied by the fighters. The deal also calls for the sponsor to be featured on graphics during the first minute of every round.

Mayweather and McGregor make perfect business partners even if their fight is a mismatch.

ROSIE COHE/SHOWTIME

There are also individual endorsements for the fighters. Mayweather pulled in $1 million from Hublot and FanDuel for sponsorship on his trunks for the Pacquiao fight and also $1 million for the Burger King mascot to escort him during the ring walk. The patches on the Filipino Senator's trunks pulled in $2.25 million.

"Being able to target both UFC and boxing fan bases in one fight is a unique opportunity that could prove to be incredibly attractive for companies wanting to reach a wider pool of consumers," Brunious said. "The general attention the fight will likely bring should prove to be incredibly valuable.

"One thing that could hold the sponsorship dollars back is the penchant for each fighter to make controversial statements that could reflect badly on companies associated with the fight. However, that's a trade-off that many of those involved with these types of sports are likely already accustomed to."

Both fighters have already uttered both racist and homophobic epithets, in addition to an incredible amount of profanity. And it doesn't seem to matter. Neither has the fact that most experts believe the matchup is not competitive, at least not on paper.

Fans and the otherwise curious are buying into the spectacle in spite of any criticism one can muster.

"This move I made right here, it's unbelievable," Mayweather said with tremendous pride. "They're gonna talk about this business move at Harvard. So I want you guys (the fans) to keep believing what they say. They call me every name in the book. 'He can't write, he can't spell, he can't read.' Keep believing in all of that. Obviously I'm doing something right if I made $800 million with no endorsement deal."

After August 26, it's going to be a whole lot more than $800 million.

TOURNAMENT TIME

THE WORLD BOXING SUPER SERIES PROMISES A SMOOTH COMPETITION

By **Norm Frauenheim**

Elements of a big-league draft, college basketball's selection process for its annual tournament and soccer's global reach are all part of the World Boxing Super Series, an updated version of what pro boxing attempted to do when it introduced the Super Six World Boxing Classic in 2009.

Welcome to Boxing and Brackets, a Sweet 16 split into two tournaments – an Elite 8 for both cruiserweights and super middleweights – in which the

Chris Eubank Jr. (here defeating Arthur Abraham, right) will have an opportunity to make a big splash in the World Boxing Super Series.

The WBSS participants (most of whom are pictured at the draft gala in Monaco) will compete in separate cruiserweight and super middleweight tournaments.

ALEXANDER SANDVOSS/AP

matchups were determined in part by the fighters themselves.

It began to come together on July 8 in Monte Carlo, Monaco, with a unique process, a draft of sorts that allowed most among the top four seeds at each weight to choose their opening opponents from a pool of contenders for the single-elimination tourney.

To wit:

At cruiserweight, Oleksandr Usyk looked a little bit like a power forward prospect and a general manager all rolled into the same suit at the annual NBA draft.

As the No. 1-seeded cruiserweight, Usyk (12-0, 10 knockouts) was already the top pick at 200 pounds. That status gave the unbeaten Ukrainian the right to choose his first opponent. He selected Marco Huck (40-4-1, 27 KOs), a longtime titleholder who looked vulnerable in a stunning loss to Mairis Briedis, of Latvia, in April.

At 168 pounds, George Groves had the No. 1 seed and the first pick that came with it. He took U.K. rival Jamie Cox.

All similarities end there, of course. Usyk and Groves aren't looking for teammates. They'd be a lot happier with an overmatched first-round foe finished and forgotten faster than a free-agent signee waived during the first few days of an NBA training camp. Usyk and Groves were scouting for quick victories and the guess is they got exactly that for quarterfinal bouts planned for September and October.

"A strategic move ... easy fights first," said Groves, who also said he picked Cox because he wanted to create "a domestic dust-up" in an opening bout that figures to generate lots of interest among U.K. fans.

By boxing standards, the trappings in Monaco were different, if not unprecedented. Maybe it was just marketing. But it was fun and still another way for a very old game to reinvent itself.

"I was fortunate to promote many Floyd Mayweather fights, Oscar De La Hoya fights and so many others," Richard Schaefer, the former Golden Boy Promotions CEO, said in Monaco. "But I have to tell you: This beats them all.

"I really believe this has an opportunity to become the brand in the sport of boxing, the kind of tournament fighters really want to participate in because it will elevate their exposure and elevate their careers."

Schaefer and Kalle Sauerland, of Germany, are the promotional brain trust for the venture, which was introduced in early March by Comosa AG, a new European firm looking to gain a foothold in the sports business.

Comosa AG, which has offices in Hamburg, Germany, and Zurich, Switzerland, has put up the money, a reported $50 million in all. Semifinals are expected in early 2018. Finals are planned for next May, when each winner will collect a check and a trophy named after Muhammad Ali.

It's not a new idea. At the amateur level, tournament boxing has been around for as long as there have been Olympic medals. And there have been a few such competitions in the pro ranks the past several decades, most recently from 2009 to 2011 with the Super Six World Boxing Classic, a 168-pound tourney often plagued by injuries

and postponements.

Still, it produced entertaining bouts and introduced some fighters to a worldwide audience. It helped turn the U.K.'s Carl Froch into an international star. It also provided a look at a future face of the game with eventual winner Andre Ward, now the unbeaten light heavyweight champion and the consensus No. 1 in the pound-for-pound debate.

Bottom line: It's worth another try.

The key is to avoid the hiccups – injuries and subsequent postponements – that so often interrupted whatever momentum the Super Six had.

A key to any successful tournament is timing, which in large part means a reliable schedule that builds drama and keeps the event in the public eye. During the Super Six, there were long stretches without a bout at all. Arthur Abraham won his first bout, leaving Jermain Taylor, a pre-tourney favorite, badly injured with a reported brain bleed.

A substitute had to be found for Taylor. The sub turned out to be Allan Green. The move was necessary, but it created confusion and probably eroded some early interest in the round-robin tourney. But that's boxing.

The World Boxing Super Series, however, promises not to repeat problems encountered by the Super Six, Comosa AG executive Roberto Dalmiglio told European media before the Monaco draft.

"We will follow a strict schedule," Dalmiglio said. "We will not accept any postponements or delays. If a fighter is unavailable to box on the proposed date, he will be replaced by a world-class reserve who has been in full training.

"In a physical sport like boxing, there's always the chance of an injury, so we need to be prepared. We are glad to announce the first two reserves, who are both exciting fighters."

A couple of months before the tournament's planned beginning, there were two alternates, one in each division: Former cruiserweight beltholder Krzysztof Glowacki (27-1, 17 KOs), of Poland, and super middleweight Vincent Feigenbutz (26-2, 23 KOs), of Germany.

In Monaco, the rest of the cruiserweight field looked like this:

Russian Murat Gassiev (24-0, 17 KOs) will defend his title against Poland's Krzysztof Wlodarczyk (53-3-1, 37 KOs) in an IBF mandatory. Despite his No. 2 seed, Gassiev had no choice.

But Briedis, the No. 3 seed and WBC champ, did. Briedis (22-0, 18 KOs) picked Cuban Mike Perez, an ex-heavyweight contender who is 2-2-1 over his last five, including a first-round knockout loss to Alexander Povetkin in 2015.

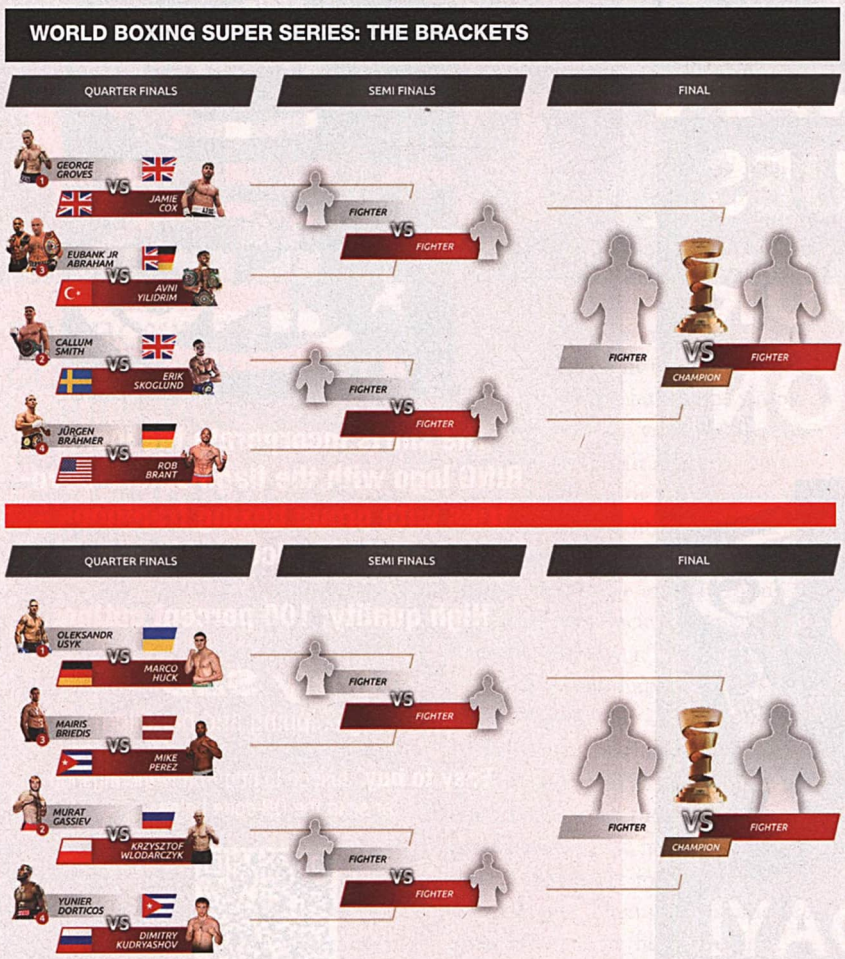
In the fourth cruiserweight quarterfinal, No. 4 seed Cuban Yunier Dorticos (21-0, 20 KOs) picked a fight with Russian Dmitry Kudryashov (21-1, 21 KOs). That's a combined 41 knockouts in 43 fights.

Meanwhile, the super middleweight field included Groves (26-3, 19 KOs) vs. Cox (23-0, 13 KOs) at the top of a bracket with a British accent.

No. 2 seed Callum Smith (22-0, 17 KOs), also of the U.K., picked unbeaten Swede Erik Skoglund (26-0, 12 KOs).

German Juergen Braehmer (48-3, 35 KOs), the No. 4 seed and an ex-light heavyweight contender from Germany, is moving down in weight. He picked Rob Brant, who's moving up in weight. Brant (22-0, 15 KOs), a longtime Minnesota amateur, has quietly gone unbeaten at middleweight.

And, finally, the last 168-pound entrant was decided when Chris Eubank Jr. (25-1, 19 KOs) easily outpointed Arthur Abraham on July 15. He'll fight Turkey's Avni Yildirim (16-0, 10 KOs). RING



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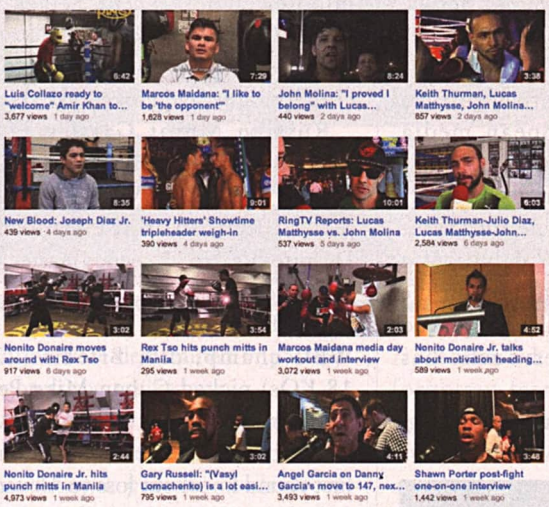

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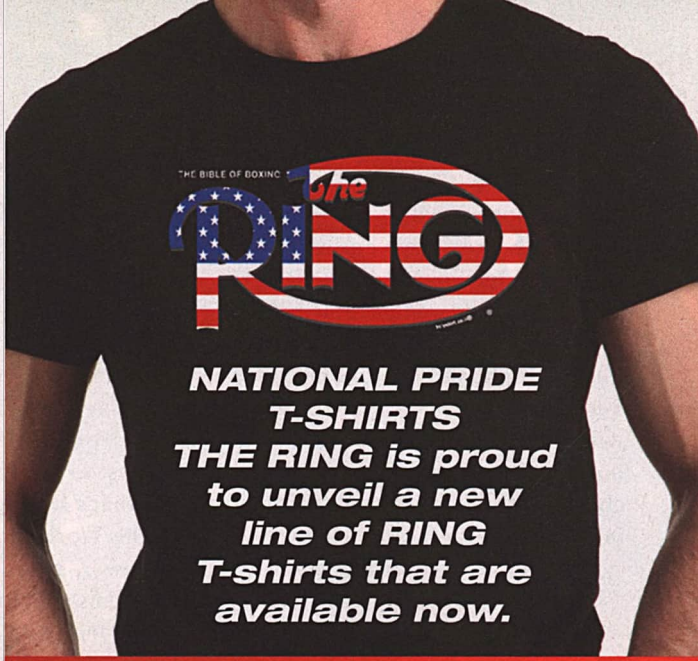

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Conor McGregor could have the last laugh.

WHAT IF?

THE BOXING COMMUNITY WOULD TAKE ONE TO THE GUT IF THE UNTHINKABLE HAPPENS

Yes, they were crass, boorish and downright vulgar at times on their WWE-styled world hype train across three countries, nowhere more so than at Wembley Arena in London. But whether we like it or not, a mammoth audience is fixated on the Floyd Mayweather Jr. vs. Conor McGregor boxing mismatch.

The money fight to top all money fights. There you have it, as simple as that. But I got the very strong sense of a nose-in-the-air attitude from many in the boxing world. Movers and shakers, pundits, boxing die-hards, almost everyone. And I would suggest that those in and around the sport just step back a moment and consider one thing:

Anything can happen on August 26 in Las Vegas.

We've seen all this many times. Ugly mismatches at every level – I don't need to list them – brawls at press conferences, folks saying they want to eat other folks' children. It's nothing new. Then we wait and see what happens in the actual fight.

The only thing we know for sure: Mayweather will reline his bank vault with fresh cash and the irascible Irishman McGregor will continue his reign as the lightning rod for the hipster generation of mixed martial arts fight followers. It will have been sound and fury, most likely signifying nothing. And on August 27, it will all be over.

McGregor has been for several years a harbinger of change. Having interviewed McGregor on this subject 16 months ago for the television station BT Sport in the U.K. and raised the prospect of a cross-sport fight with Mayweather, it has not surprised me in the least that it has come about. McGregor has a self-belief, a special quality. There

are traits of Muhammad Ali in the way he has taken MMA by storm. He just wanted to have a go against the best. And Mayweather has found the perfect promotional dance partner. Good luck to McGregor. He will almost certainly be roundly defeated, utterly frustrated by the undefeated American.

Or so it seems.

There is a resentment in some quarters, one suspects, that with such a gulf in boxing ability between them it can generate such great profit. The green-eyed monster exists in many folk. The other side of this is that the boxing purist – from the very highest scribe to the devoted fan – feels that anarchy has been loosed upon the world, as the poet W.B. Yeats might have said. But as I say, this battle between two of the generation's biggest stars is for one night only.

Far be it from your correspondent from Across the Pond to tell boxing purists that they are wrong. They don't appear to be, as on paper McGregor ought not to lay a glove on one of the most astute defensive boxers of all time. But didn't Muhammad Ali, aka "The Greatest," take up a challenge in a money-spinning exercise against a Japanese wrestler by the name of Antonio Inoki and emerge with a draw? If David fought Goliath today it would be on pay-per-view, and we know what happened there (though David would have been disqualified for using that sling).

My view is that Mayweather may have to fend off a whirling McGregor for six minutes or so, as it is almost beholden unto the guy from the UFC to throw the kitchen sink at the master of boxing. But who knows, he may just stand off and try all sorts of weird things. And just have to ask the question: How many times have we seen upsets in a ring?

By turning one's nose up at the contest altogether, the boxing community may be setting itself up for a fall if, for whatever reason, the fight heads south for Mayweather. Just saying.

CHRIS EUBANK JR.

And on the subject of hype and promotion, the father-and-son team of Chris Eubank Sr. and Jr. never come up short in a promotional moment. They have a gift for it. Junior made his case clear when he set his sights on a showdown with fellow titleholder George Groves in the eight-man super middleweight World Boxing Super Series tournament. Eight 168-pounders, including Groves, terrific prospect Callum Smith and unbeaten Jamie Cox, have been signed up for the WBSS. The fighters in that competition will share $50 million in prize money with those in a separate eight-man cruiserweight tournament.

The tournament is similar to the one that made stars of Andre Ward and Carl Froch six years ago, the

Chris Eubank Jr. demonstrated against Arthur Abraham that he belongs in the World Boxing Super Series.

Super Six World Boxing Classic, eventually won by the American Ward, who now sits atop boxing's pound-for-pound list. There are some mouth-watering prospective matchups here, and we can only hope that there are no pull-outs.

Eubank defeated Arthur Abraham by a one-sided unanimous decision in July to qualify for the WBSS. It was a dull fight, not in terms of Eubank's vigor but in the way Abraham fought – covering up, taking barrages of shots on his arms and gloves, never really getting rocked but offering almost nothing in return. However, Eubank did dominate. He won 118-110, 118-110, 120-108 on the scorecards, reflecting the fact Abraham was there – not being unkind here – to pick up perhaps the last big payday of his career.

Thus, we knew nothing more about Eubank afterward, other than he has desire and comes to fight. There are question marks about his power at 168 pounds, but few have put a dent in Abraham. We shall see.

Eubank will face Turkey's Avni Yildirim in a WBSS quarterfinal contest, with the winner set to face either Groves or the rising Briton Cox. Groves, recently crowned WBA super middleweight titleholder with a victory over Fedor Chudinov in Sheffield, sat ringside to witness Eubank's triumph.

We saw the Eubank sales-patter straight afterward: "I am going into the (WBSS) tournament to take Groves' belt. He knows what is going to happen when we get into the ring. It will be a spectacular fight, the whole of Britain wants to see it and after I beat him, I am coming for James DeGale."

That's another one to whet the appetite.

LEE SELBY

When Lee Selby won his IBF featherweight title in May 2015, I made the pilgrimage to Barry Island in Wales for the local man's open-top bus tour through the tough, charming seaside town. I recall seeing the delight on the face of Selby and his whole family on that bus at the turnout, as the streets were filled with fans, filled with those whose pride was carried by the "Welsh Mayweather."

They are close, the Selbys. Their father is a fight nut, and both Lee and his brother Andrew, also a professional, are steeped in boxing. And as we know, fight week is always a tough time for any boxer.

But for Selby, one can only imagine how he felt following the sudden death of his mother, Frankie, the Tuesday four days before his most recent fight. Yet he refused to buckle. He still fought, and Wales' 12th world titleholder beat Jonathan Victor Barros by unanimous decision in the co-feature to Eubank-Abraham at Wembley Arena. He dedicated the retention of his belt to his mother. Selby's courage is unquestionable. But his stoicism that week deserves very special praise and mention indeed. Very special. Cheers. RING

Gareth A Davies is Boxing Correspondent for The London Telegraph

TOP 10

1. CARL FRAMPTON
2. ANTHONY JOSHUA
3. TONY BELLEW
4. JAMES DEGALE
5. LEE SELBY
6. TERRY FLANAGAN
7. GEORGE GROVES
8. KELL BROOK
9. KAL YAFAI
10. JAMIE MCDONNELL

11-15: Billy Joe Saunders, Ryan Burnett, Callum Smith, Scott Quigg, Tyson Fury.

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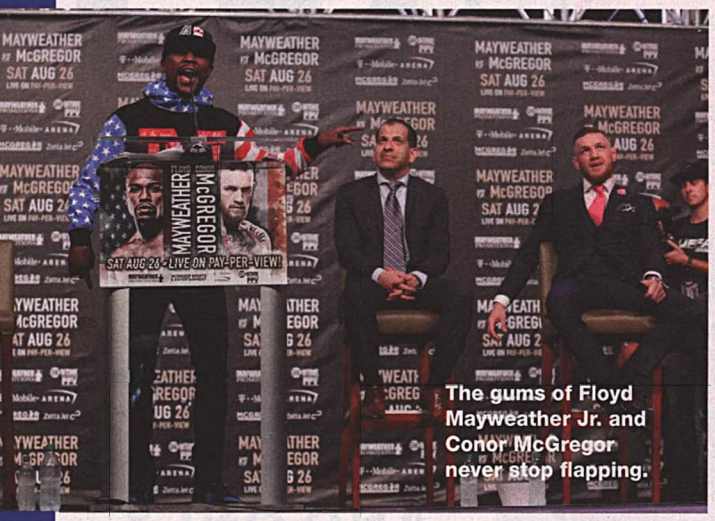
EXCERPTS FROM THE RINGTV.COM EDITOR'S POPULAR COLUMN



The gums of Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Conor McGregor never stop flapping.

Since 2001, RingTV.com Editor Doug Fischer has held an ongoing dialog – which occasionally becomes heated debate – with boxing fans from around the world in "Dougie's Mailbag." The following excerpts are from the June 23 and July 21 edjtions of the Friday mailbag.

AARON, from Miami, was disgusted by the Floyd Mayweather Jr.-Conor McGregor world press tour, which he called "ridiculous and vile with its racist, homophobic and misogynist rants." He says the fighters should shoulder most of the blame for the foul nature of the tour but asks if the UFC and Showtime were complicit in what happened.

DOUGIE'S reply: Before I answer your question, I have to ask you one: Did you expect Floyd and Conor to behave like anything other than two self-centered cretins? Were Showtime and the UFC "complicit" in what happened? I guess they are somewhat involved. I don't think they sat Mayweather and McGregor down before the start of the tour and told them, "Hey guys, don't forget to go out there and act like racist, sexist, homophobic schmucks. We're really counting on you both to appeal to the lowest rungs of society, so please, make us proud by making decent human beings sick to their stomachs." However, I don't think the executives with UFC or Showtime were displeased with the way the tour went down, despite the overwhelming negative press that it spawned. My guess is that they are happy and encouraged by the fan turnouts on each stop of the tour, the massive live-stream traffic it generated and the overall sports/entertainment media coverage it received. All of that suggests that the August 26 event will sell very well.

Having said that, there's no doubt in my mind that if the same type of rhetoric that was spewed during the "MayMac" tour were spoken at a Golden Boy or Top Rank-promoted press conference or event tour, there would be an uproar from a certain fan/media demographic, which would demand that Oscar De La Hoya and Bob Arum publicly address and/or apologize for the hurtful words uttered by the main event combatants. That didn't happen with Mayweather-McGregor (probably because there are very low expectations for the fighters' public behavior).

CARLOS, from Hermosillo, Mexico, was extremely impressed with WBC 130-pound beltholder Miguel Berchelt's recent unanimous decision over hardnosed former titleholder Takashi Miura. He says he can't help but "salivate" over the potential junior lightweight clash between Berchelt and Vasyl Lomachenko, but adds that he wouldn't mind if that unification bout "marinated a little bit."

DOUGIE'S reply: I don't mind there being a buildup to an eventual showdown between Vasyl Lomachenko and Berchelt, especially if the 25-year-old Mexican boxer-puncher collects another 130-pound belt (I'm thinking a WBC/WBA unification with Jezreel Corrales is possible) in the meantime. However, I don't think there's any reason for the top two junior lightweights to avoid each other for an inordinate amount of time. Berchelt is in his athletic prime, and he's proven his skill, technique, power, durability, heart and versatility in his last two bouts (hardcore-quality 23 rounds vs. Francisco Vargas and Miura). He has 33 pro bouts under his belt and a significant reach advantage against Loma, so I don't think he needs much more seasoning before rolling the dice against the ultra-talented Ukrainian southpaw.

I know 99 percent of the boxing world will heavily favor Lomachenko to not only beat but outclass Berchelt, but I think "El Alacran" can pose some problems to the amateur boxing legend. And I don't just want to assume that the pound-for-pound player is superior to all the other junior lightweights in the game – I want to see him PROVE it.

TOFUNMI, from Lagos, Nigeria, believes that THE RING light heavyweight champ Andre Ward's rematch victory over Sergey Kovalev placed him "very close" to Floyd Mayweather Jr. in terms of their ring accomplishments. He says if Ward beats WBC beltholder Adonis Stevenson and another top 175-pound contender, such as Artur Beterbiev, and then wins a world title at cruiserweight, he'll rate the current pound-for-pound king's legacy over Mayweather's – in part because he believes that "Money" was a better matchmaker than fighter. Tofunmi believes that Mayweather beat a lot of "not-in-their-prime champions" and "always waited for his opponents to show a downslide before fighting them."

DOUGIE'S reply: You know I'm not one who appreciates Mayweather, or puts that much stock in his 49-0 (soon-to-be 50-0) record, or includes him among boxing's all-time greats, but there's no doubt in my mind that he deserves to be a first-ballot Hall of Famer (hey, maybe as a fighter AND as a matchmaker) and that, for the time being, his boxing resume FAR exceeds what Ward has accomplished to date. Mayweather is a five-division titleholder. He won major belts at 130, 135, 140, 147 and 154 pounds. Ward is a two-division champ. He won titles at 168 and 175 pounds. I do keep in mind that Ward also earned championship recognition from THE RING in both divisions, which is an impressive feat (the last fighter to do that was first-ballot Hall of Fame inductee Joe Calzaghe). However, Mayweather held three RING titles – at lightweight, welterweight and junior middleweight – so he has Ward beat by one belt. Mayweather also fought 22 men who held major world titles, including two current Hall of Famers (Oscar De La Hoya and Arturo Gatti) and four who will be first-ballot inductees (Manny Pacquiao, Shane Mosley, Juan Manuel Marquez and Miguel Cotto). Ricky Hatton and Genaro Hernandez will no doubt be enshrined eventually (if not in the next couple years).

I agree that many of the better names that Mayweather faced were well past their primes (most notably De La Hoya and Mosley), and it's pretty clear that he faced others at the most opportune times for him (such as Marquez at welterweight in the natural featherweight's first bout above 135 pounds). However, Diego Corrales, Jose Luis Castillo, Zab Judah and Jesus Chavez were all in their primes when Mayweather faced them. Not. Too. Shabby. Ward, on the other hand, has faced a total of six opponents who have held major world titles. Six. Kovalev, Carl Froch, Mikkel Kessler, Chad Dawson, Arthur Abraham and Sakio Bika. These are/were all formidable fighters, but at the present time Froch is the only future Hall of Fame candidate. Maybe Kovalev will bounce back from the losses to Ward and accomplish enough to be considered a future Hall of Famer, but the current RING light heavyweight champ is going to need more scalps than Stevenson, Beterbiev and one of the cruiserweight beltholders to surpass Mayweather's legacy, in my opinion.

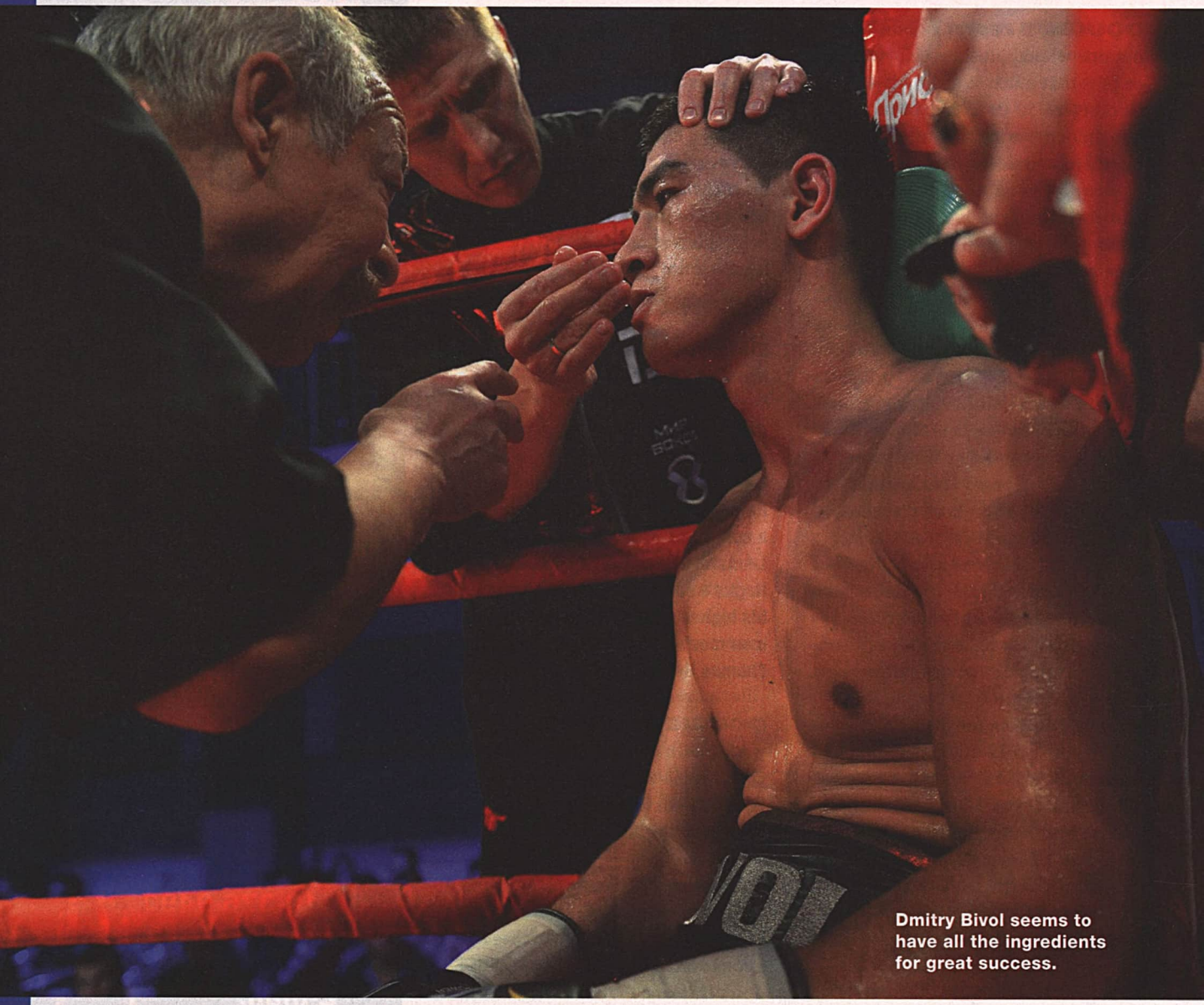
STEVE, from upstate New York, says Marvin Hagler is his favorite fighter of all time. He asked Fischer whether the former middleweight champ deserves to be considered one of the Top 50 fighters of all time, and how Hagler would have fared had he made a comeback after his loss to Sugar Ray Leonard. Steve also wondered whether Hagler's career is diminished due to his highest-profile fights being against men moving up in weight (Leonard, Thomas Hearns and Roberto Duran).

DOUGIE'S reply: You can't go wrong with Hagler as your all-time fave. I think he belongs in the Top 50 boxers of all time and definitely near the top of the greatest middleweights of all time.

Had Hagler come back after the Leonard fight, I think he would have made a fortune with rematches (vs. Leonard, Hearns and Duran), but I don't think he would have fared well against the top prime middleweight contenders of the late 1980s, such as Sumbu Kalambay, Michael Nunn, Mike McCallum and Frank Tate. His body was worn out after a long, hard career and title reign. (Although, a showdown with Iran Barkley would have been a lot of fun, wouldn't it?)

And I don't think his career was diminished at all by fighting Leonard, Hearns and Duran. Those three are all-time greats, and they won major titles at middleweight (Duran won the WBC belt at age 37 in THE RING's Fight of the Year with Barkley) and heavier weight classes (Ray and Tommy both won belts at 168 and 175 pounds) after they faced Hagler.

By Mike Coppinger



Dmitry Bivol seems to have all the ingredients for great success.

NEXT IN LINE

DMITRY BIVOL COULD TURN OUT TO BE ONE OF THE BEST FIGHTERS FROM THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

One by one, they arrive from Eastern Europe with dreams of making it in America. And it's not too long before they're dominating headlines.

Gennady Golovkin. Sergey Kovalev. Vasyl Lomachenko.

Specifically, the light heavyweight division has been a haven for fighters from the former Soviet Bloc. And now you can add another, one with the look of a man who will be champion before too long: Dmitry Bivol.

Much like the others, Bivol seemingly came out of nowhere. But now that he's in our lives, it's hard to turn away. You see, when Bivol lands flush – and as he develops, he's more and more accurate with his sledgehammer right hand – fighters don't last much longer after that.

He's just 11 fights into his pro career but Bivol has already seen both the 10- and 12-round distances.

He was born to a Moldovan father and Korean mother in the small town of Tokmak, Kyrgyzstan, a country of approximately 6 million that borders Kazakhstan in Central Asia. Tokmak lies to the east of Bishkek, the country's capital. Glass manufacturing is one of the top

Pavel Lisitsyn/Sputnik via AP

industries in the area.

Bivol discovered boxing when he was 6 years old and went on to become a decorated amateur with a record of 268-15.

He arrived in the United States in 2014 and has plowed through the competition from the beginning. He made his biggest impression in his last two fights, displaying the obvious talent of a future champion.

Samuel Clarkson was Bivol's first victim of note on American television. Clarkson was stopped in four rounds on "ShoBox: The New Generation" in April. Bivol then forced former world-title challenger Cedric Agnew into a defensive shell before stopping him on his feet on the undercard of the Andre Ward-Kovalev rematch in June.

It took Kovalev seven rounds to take care of Agnew. Bivol needed just four.

Bivol admitted that "no doubt" he also was in Las Vegas to scout both fighters in the main event. Manager Vadim Kornilov, who also steers the careers of Denis Lebedev and Ruslan Provodnikov, said Bivol is ready for a world-title opportunity right now.

And you shouldn't chalk that up to the usual managerial hyperbole.

The 26-year-old is only the latest Russian puncher to crash the 175-pound title scene but he also believes he'll rise above the likes of Kovalev and Artur Beterbiev.

"The road to the international arena for Soviet fighters has opened only 20, 25 years ago," Bivol, who admired Sugar Ray Leonard and Roy Jones Jr. growing up, said through Kornilov. "It was tougher back then and people were afraid of going out. I think now that it kind of has erupted, the fighters from the Soviet Union are finding motivation and perspective for themselves in the United States."

Much like GGG and Kovalev, solid opponents aren't exactly jumping at the opportunity to fight Bivol. And unlike the others, his defense has impressed to this juncture, even though the boxer-puncher fights in a similar, aggressive manner.

He's already rated No. 9 by THE RING at light heavyweight. And with the WBA "interim" belt around his waist, he'll soon earn a mandatory shot at the title.

One thing is clear: Bivol is on the fast track. He won't be coddled. He's ready to fulfill his vast promise now.

"I always had a feeling inside of me that I could make money and can become popular and can become something in boxing," said Bivol, who has a calm demeanor. "I've had a couple of trainers throughout my career and almost every trainer always told me, 'One day you can be something, you can be a star and you can make money doing this.'

"And I believed them. It kind of motivated me. And it put a thought inside me that has materialized."

It's likely fans will soon believe those trainers, too.

THE ESSENTIALS
DMITRY BIVOL

Age: 26

Weight class: Light heavyweight

Height: 6 feet (183 cm)

Stance: Orthodox

Hometown: Saint Petersburg, Russia

Record: 11-0 (9 knockouts)

Biggest strengths: Powerful puncher ... Can break through guard with straight punches ... Pressure-fighter who also possesses stout defense ... Faced a former world-title challenger in 11th pro fight ... Deep amateur background ... Already has gone 12 rounds

Biggest question marks: Can he take a punch? ... How will he respond to adversity in a tough fight?

3 MORE TO WATCH

RYAN MARTIN
LIGHTWEIGHT

Martin (19-0, 11 KOs) is an impressive athlete. And at 5 feet 11 inches, he has the range and size to put it to good use. Martin's career stagnated as he went through a legal battle with promoter and rapper 50 Cent. But now that it's behind him, the Clevelander has impressed, most notably in the GGG-Daniel Jacobs pay-per-view opener with a stoppage of Bryant Cruz.

STEVE NELSON
LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

Nelson (8-0, 7 KOs) was a 2012 Olympic alternate, and four years later the Army veteran turned pro. The Omaha, Nebraska, resident is promoted by Terence Crawford and Brian McIntyre (trainer/co-manager of the champ). At 29, he's been staying active with no time to waste. Only one fighter has lasted the distance with Nelson, who has proven to be an impressive puncher and athlete.

SONNY FREDRICKSON
JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT

Fredrickson (17-0, 11 KOs) is a giant 140-pounder at 6 feet 2 inches, and with his background as a four-sport athlete in high school, he could make waves soon. He grabbed the 2013 National PAL bronze medal and eventually signed with Roc Nation Sports. Fredrickson was set to step up in class on August 4 with a ShoBox bout against Bakhtiyar Eyubov.

 By Thomas Gerbasi

Nicola Adams leads a strong group of British women.

BRITISH INVASION

THE NEW 'FAB FOUR' POISED TO MAKE NOISE AS PROFESSIONALS

It wouldn't be out of place to call the quartet of former British amateur stars now making the transition into the professional ranks "The Fab Four." But unlike John, Paul, George and Ringo plotting world domination as The Beatles in the early 1960s, there were no such discussions between Nicola Adams, Chantelle Cameron, Natasha Jonas and Savannah Marshall when they

were representing Team GB (Great Britain).

"No, never," laughs Marshall. "At the time, we were all just trying to make the Olympics. I don't think the pros were even mentioned."

That's not surprising, because once women's boxing was included in the Olympic program for the 2012 Games, top amateurs had one goal and one goal only – to represent their nation on the biggest stage possible. Adams, Jonas and Marshall all achieved that goal in 2012, with Adams picking up a gold medal. She repeated the feat in 2016, while Marshall made it to the quarterfinals in Rio de Janeiro. Cameron didn't earn a trip to the Olympics, but a pair of European championships cemented her place as one of England's best.

Then it was time for them to consider the next step, which wasn't complicated. Long gone are the days when Jane Couch had to battle the British Boxing Board of Control for a professional license – a fight she won in 1998 when a tribunal overturned the BBBofC's verdict and decided that women had just as much of a right to box professionally as men did.

Today, women's boxing is on the rise around the world, with England among the leaders.

"It's changed a lot," Marshall said. "Female boxers are a lot more accepted now and it seems like whenever a show is on, there seems to be a female bout on the card. That wasn't always the case, and now it is."

Leeds' Adams made her pro debut in April, and at press time she was 2-0. Northampton's Cameron also won her first two bouts. And Liverpool's Jonas took just 92 seconds to win her June debut. That left Hartlepool's Marshall, who had not made a decision until she received a fateful phone call.

"I left the Great Britain squad in February, and I was at a point in my life and career where I didn't know what to do," said the 26-year-old. "I still enjoyed boxing and I still loved fighting, but it is still really hard for females to make it in the pro ranks, especially if you don't have an Olympic medal."

Marshall soon discovered that powerful people were following her career. She received a phone call from one of them in May.

"For Mayweather Promotions to come along and say that they're going to sign me, it was like a dream come true," she said. "I jumped at the chance and I've got my boxing buzz back at the minute. I'm really enjoying training, I'm looking forward to my debut. We'll see how that goes and then we'll go from there."

That debut was scheduled to take place on the heavily hyped Floyd Mayweather Jr.-Conor McGregor card on August 26. It's a huge stage for the "Silent Assassin," who could end up as the biggest star of the GB Fab Four if she can make a name for herself in Las Vegas and eventually repeat her amateur victory over U.S. phenom Claressa Shields.

"We're both the same weight and we both want to become world champions in our sport and our weight division, so we're bound to cross paths sooner or later," said Marshall, the only person – amateur or pro – to defeat the two-time Olympic gold medalist.

Marshall beat Shields in the second round of the 2012 World Championships in Qinhuangdao, China. So if you were wondering who the "1" on Shields' 78-1 amateur record is, now you know. A rematch could be the biggest fight in women's boxing one day.

For now, it's time for four former teammates to attack the world together.

"It's brilliant," Marshall said. "We were all on the Great Britain squad together as amateurs, and now we've all turned over (to the pros), so it's really good." RING

FIGHTER OF THE MONTH

SENIESA ESTRADA

Two impressive victories

THE RING's Prospect of the Year in 2015 returned from a nine-month layoff in June with a blistering 38-second knockout of Rachel Sazoff. The Los Angeles native was back in the ring less a month later, shutting out Aracely Palacios over six rounds. Now 10-0, "Super Bad" is going to keep active with a prime spot on the September 9 "Superfly" card at StubHub Center. Big things are expected from the 25-year-old in 2018.

POUND FOR POUND

1. **CECILIA BRAEKHUS**
   Norway • 31-0 (8 KOs)
   Welterweight
2. **DELFINE PERSOON**
   Belgium • 38-1 (16 KOs)
   Lightweight
3. **YESICA YOLANDA BOPP**
   Argentina • 31-1 (13 KOs)
   Junior flyweight
4. **JESSICA CHAVEZ**
   Mexico • 29-4-3 (4 KOs)
   Flyweight
5. **AMANDA SERRANO**
   U.S. • 33-1-1 (25 KOs)
   Featherweight
6. **JELENA MRDJENOVICH**
   Canada • 37-10-2 (19 KOs)
   Featherweight
7. **ERICA ANABELLA FARIAS**
   Argentina • 24-2 (10 KOs)
   Junior welterweight
8. **LAYLA MCCARTER**
   U.S. • 39-13-5 (10 KOs)
   Lightweight
9. **IBETH ZAMORA SILVA**
   Mexico • 27-6 (12 KOs)
   Junior flyweight
10. **ESMERALDA MORENO**
    Mexico • 35-9-1 (11 KOs)
    Junior flyweight

Through fights of July 23, 2017

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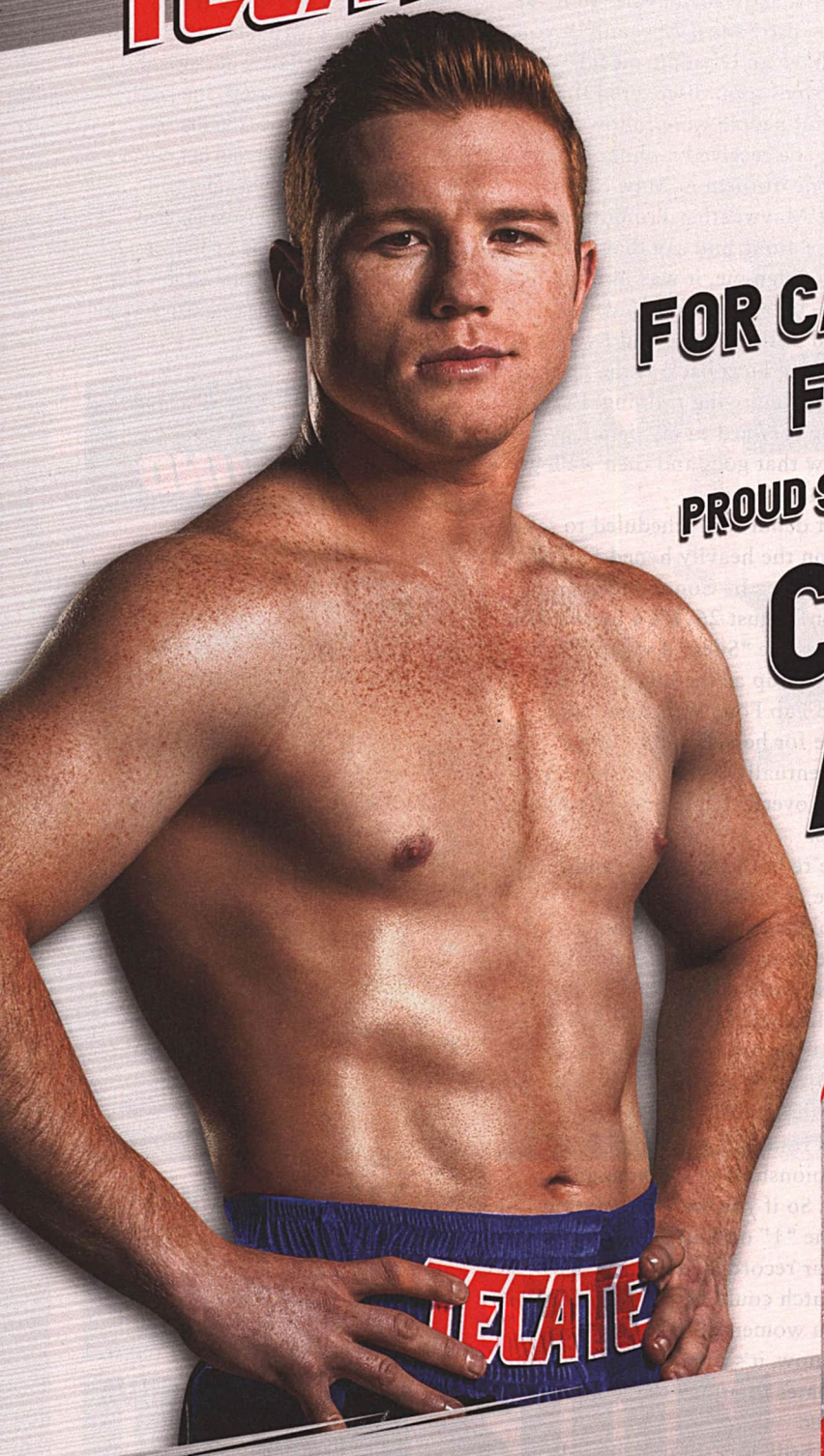

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RINGSIDE REPORTS

BY NORM FRAUENHEIM

AP PHOTO/TERTIUS PICKARD

Jeff Horn's controversial victory over Manny Pacquiao (right) raised questions about the judging and Pacquiao's future.

JEFF HORN UD 12 MANNY PACQUIAO

Date: July 1 (July 2 in Australia)
Site: Suncorp Stadium, Brisbane, Australia
Division: Welterweight
Weights: Horn 147 pounds, Pacquiao 146
RING ratings (before fight): Horn not rated, Pacquiao No. 4
Network: ESPN, BoxNation (U.K.)

It's been a long goodbye. A difficult one too. It continued for Manny Pacquiao in a way hard to imagine when the money was big and the knockouts were frequent.

The knockouts are gone. It's hard to know how much more money there is for the Filipino who always seems to need more to fund his generosity and political ambitions. There are questions about how much more he can earn after a controversial loss to a Jeff Horn, an Aussie who is a lot better known today than he was in June.

It's the money that will probably determine whether Pacquiao answers another opening bell or finally becomes an ex-fighter and a full-time senator.

One more bout, a rematch with Horn, appeared to be the plan a couple of weeks after Pacquiao's stunning loss, unanimous on the scorecards and unanimously controversial for just about everybody other than the World Boxing Organization and Horn's fans among the crowd of about 51,000 in Brisbane.

Pacquiao, who collected $10 million and had a rematch clause in his contract, said he wants another shot at Horn. Pacquiao trainer Freddie Roach said he'd be there for his longtime friend and fighter for one more go-round. But only one, said Roach, who said he then would ask Pacquiao (59-7-2, 38 KOs) to retire. Horn (17-0-1, 11 KOs), who collected $500,000, wants it and the pay raise too.

Yeah, there was talk about Horn-Pacquiao II, but not much in the way of specifics. Place, time and – above all – money weren't mentioned in the lingering furor.

Waleska Roldan of New York scored it 117-111, Chris Flores of Phoenix and Ramon Cerdan of Buenos Aires had it 115-113 each. Roldan's card stirred up most of the controversy, including demands for an investigation. After a review of the bout's video, the WBO stood by the decision.

Controversy in the decision was fueled in part by scoring that was inconsistent with CompuBox numbers. Pacquiao had a 2-1 edge in punches landed, according to CompuBox, which scored the fight from New York instead of ringside.

Pacquiao also overwhelmed Horn in a ferocious ninth round. Yet his dominance over that three minutes summed up the dilemma. He didn't stop an injured Horn in that round or the 10th. Pacquiao hasn't stopped anyone since Miguel Cotto in November 2009. That's 13 fights over nearly eight years without a stoppage.

With finishing power no longer in his own hands, Pacquiao has left himself open to the scorecard controversy that few fighters avoid over a long career. He also was at the wrong end of a split decision in 2012 in an even bigger flap against Tim Bradley.

At best, leaving it up to the judges is a gamble, which means a lousy decision or two is always in the cards. Nothing new there. Even a bad score, however, can include an unmistakable message. It could be telling Pacquiao to stop for good. »

WORLDWIDE RESULTS— Go to: bit.ly/worldwide-results or scan the QR code to see weekly fight results at RingTV.com.

NO. 3 ROBERT EASTER UD 12 NO. 4 DENIS SHAFIKOV

June 30, Toledo (Bounce TV)

Few will remember what happened in Toledo on a weekend when controversial decisions went global, the result of outrage over scorecards in Australia that gave Jeff Horn a decision over Manny Pacquiao.

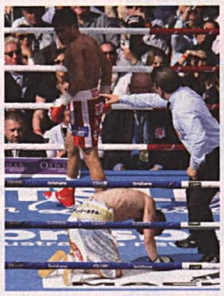
Still, Robert Easter's decision over Denis Shafikov was a precursor to what would happen Down Under.

"Ridiculous," Shafikov trainer Abel Sanchez said.

It was, but not for the result. Easter (20-0, 14 KOs) won. The controversy was in the margin on cards turned in by Eugene Grant and Jamie Garayua, who scored it 120-108, a shutout each.

"I give myself a B-minus," Easter, still a lightweight titleholder, said after a bout in which he failed to use his advantage in reach, allowing Shafikov (38-3-1, 20 KOs) to step inside for a 12-round brawl.

How about an F for Grant and Garayua? If you're grading on the curve, give an A to Carlos Ortiz for his 116-112 card.



NO. 7 JERWIN ANCAJAS TKO 7 TEIRU KINOSHITA

July 2, Brisbane, Australia (ESPN)

Jerwin Ancajas did what his boss couldn't. He scored a stoppage.

Ancajas, who is the first fighter with a world title to sign with Manny Pacquiao's MP Promotions, ended any chance at the kind of scorecard controversy that would erupt in the main event with a beautifully executed body-shot for a seventh-round TKO of Teiru Kinoshita in defense of his IBF junior bantamweight belt on the Pacquiao-Horn undercard.

"I was happy with the result, though the early ending was an unexpected bonus," said Ancajas (27-1-1, 18 KOs), who landed body shots throughout the six-plus rounds.

Ancajas also bloodied Kinoshita (25-2-1, 8 KOs) above the right eye in the second. The cut appeared to bother the Japanese lefthander for the next few rounds. With the eye almost swollen shut after six, the Filipino landed a right hook to the body, finishing the bout at 1:53 of the seventh.

JOSH TAYLOR TKO 7 OHARA DAVIES

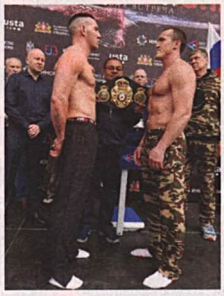
July 8, Glasgow, Scotland (Channel 5 U.K.)

It was a fight for the U.K.'s future. It was also a fight rooted in the U.K.'s promotional past. There was nothing united about a Josh Taylor-Ohara Davies bout that was preceded by insults on social media and probably a few street corners.

In the end, the Barry McGuigan-promoted Taylor (10-0, 9 KOs) was the better junior welterweight prospect, knocking down the Eddie Hearn-promoted Davies (15-1, 12 KOs) twice for a seventh-round TKO.

"I made him quit," said Taylor, a 2012 Olympian who dropped Davies in the third and again in the seventh with a right.

Actually, Howard Foster made Davies quit at 2:25 of the seventh when Foster ended it with Davies on the ropes and looking defenseless. But insults were the tone, before and after a fight that McGuigan hoped would set up an all-Scottish showdown: Taylor vs. Ricky Burns.



NO. 5 DENIS LEBEDEV UD 12 MARK FLANAGAN

July 9, Ekaterinburg, Russia

They put the snoozer back into cruiser.

Russian cruiserweight Denis Lebedev retained his title without much risk and no good explanation as to why he still had a belt in the first place.

Lebedev (30-2, 22 KOs) lost the IBF title by a split decision to Murat Gassiev last December yet for some reason his "super" version of the WBA 200-pound title was not on the line.

There was nothing super about Lebedev's bout with an Aussie named Mark Flanagan.

Flanagan (22-5, 15 KOs) had never fought outside of Australia and showed why. He never had a chance and Lebedev, well, cruised. With trainer Freddie Roach in his corner, Lebedev knocked Flanagan down with a body punch in the ninth round en route to a unanimous snoozer – 119-108, 120-107, 119-108 on the snorecards.

NO. 4 MIGUEL BERCHELT UD 12 NO. 5 TAKASHI MIURA

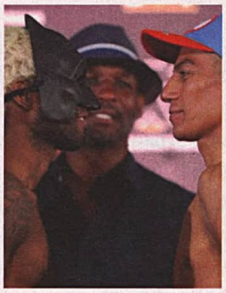
July 15, Inglewood, California (HBO)

A dramatic showdown was expected. It wasn't that. But it was validation, tangible proof of Miguel Berchelt's claim on his own place among the game's best.

If there were doubts, he eliminated them with a thorough victory over Takashi Miura in a junior lightweight bout that fell short of expectations, mostly because of what a versatile Berchelt did.

"I knew this was going to be won with intelligence," Berchelt (32-1, 28 KOs), an emerging force in a Vasyl Lomachenko-dominated division, said after a 116-111, 119-108 and 120-109 decision over Miura (31-4-2, 24 KOs) in a title bout mandated by their victories on a card last January. "Miura is tough."

He is. But the Japanese fighter with a big left and aggressive nature is limited in ways Berchelt is not. Berchelt kept his distance and, for good measure, flashed his own power with a first-round knockdown.



NO. 3 JEZREEL CORRALES TD 10 ROBINSON CASTELLANOS

July 15, Inglewood, California (HBO)

It wasn't pretty, but if you want art, go to a museum. Jezreel Corrales just wanted a victory.

He got one against Robinson Castellanos, retaining his 130-pound belt and staying in line for a date with Miguel Berchelt at the cost of a cut above one eye in a bout that ended with an accident.

A fight scheduled for 12 rounds ended in the 10th because of a headbutt. At 31 seconds of the round, the ringside doctor ended it, ruling Castellanos couldn't continue because of a gash below his right eye.

"Probably my best fight," said Corrales (22-1, 8 KOs), who led on two cards – 96-92 and 94-93. On the third card, it was 94-94.

"That butt should have disqualified him," said Castellanos (24-13, 14 KOs), who scored two knockdowns in the fourth and was knocked down in the seventh. "It could have been fatal."

NO. 8 SULLIVAN BARRERA UD 10 NO. 5 JOE SMITH JR.

July 15, Inglewood, Calif. (HBO)

"Rocky" is a great story. So is Joe Smith Jr. But they're just fantasies next to a fighter who knows how to land real punches. Sullivan Barrera had those punches. Had the know-how too.

Barrera punctuated the ride with reality in a 97-92, 96-93, 97-92 decision over Smith (23-2, 19 KOs) in the New York laborer's first bout since knocking Bernard Hopkins out of the ring.

Barrera (20-1, 14 KOs) survived Smith's power. He got up from a first-round knockdown. Then the native of Cuba, whose father was at ringside for the first time since his son turned pro, had too many punches, too much skill, too much of everything in a light heavyweight victory that could make him Sergey Kovalev's first opponent since losing to Andre Ward.

Smith deserves some credit: He fought most of the bout with a broken jaw.

CHRIS EUBANK JR. UD 12 NO. 7 ARTHUR ABRAHAM

July 15, London (ITV U.K.)

Chris Eubank Jr. says a lot. Wins a lot too. What's missing is a definitive statement on just how good he is. The chance at making one, however, is still there.

That opportunity might be bigger than ever after a businesslike decision over fading, former two-time champion Arthur Abraham. It put Eubank in the quarterfinals of the 168-pound World Boxing Super Series tournament against Turkey's Avni Yildirim.

It was a stepping-stone, and that's how Eubank (25-1, 19 KOs) treated it.

"I got to go 12 rounds and get the experience," Eubank said after scoring a one-sided 118-110, 120-108, 118-110 victory over Abraham (46-6, 30 KOs). "Of all the guys that have beaten him, I beat him the most convincingly."

The real convincing awaits, however, first against Yildirim and then very likely against U.K. rival George Groves.

NO. 4 LEE SELBY UD 12 JONATHAN BARROS

July 15, London (ITV U.K.)

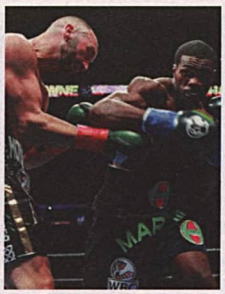
The ring provided refuge for a grieving Lee Selby. He won. He beat Jonathan Barros.

But the grief will always be there for a mom, Frankie, who died four days before the opening bell.

"I'm going to try to enjoy this win as much as I can, and now I'll drive home and face the harsh truth," Selby (25-1, 9 KOs) told British media after a 117-110, 119-108, 117-110 decision over Barros (41-5-1, 22 KOs). "The hardest part was having my brother call me. He woke me up with the news.

"I had my sister on the phone crying, all of us crying and them telling me to come home. … After I came off the phone, I switched it off, cut myself away from it, got on with the job and told myself, 'I'll see them all when I get back.'"

Back for a challenge as tough as any.



NO. 9 MARCUS BROWNE TKO 2 SEAN MONAGHAN

July 15, Uniondale, N.Y. (Fox)

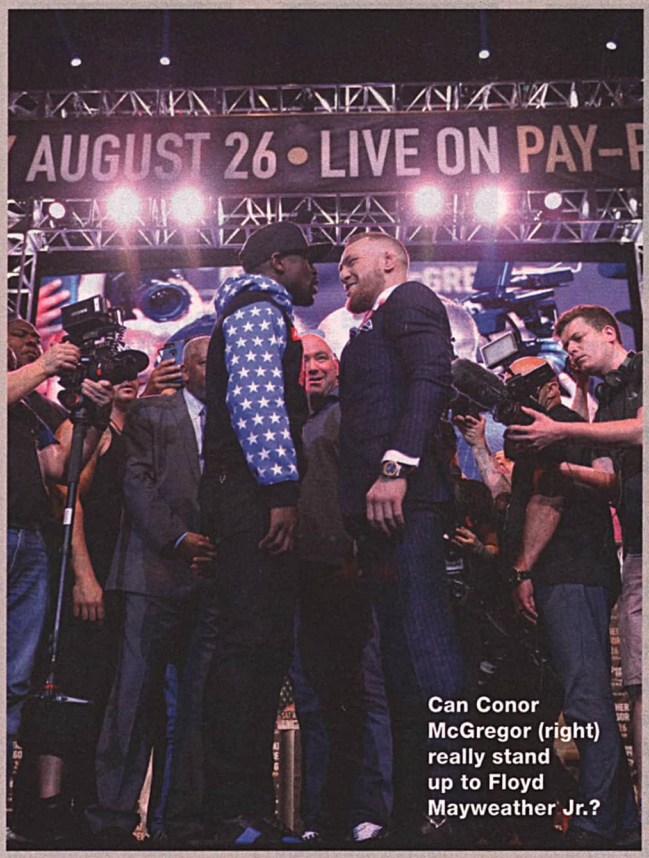
They are good friends. But Marcus Browne and Sean Monaghan aren't equals. At least, not in the ring.

Browne proved that with a blowout, a second-round stoppage of Monaghan.

Monaghan said he and Browne (20-0, 15 KOs) had probably sparred 100 rounds over the last decade. During that time, Monaghan (28-1, 17 KOs) said he could "barely lay a glove" on Browne, an emerging light heavyweight who wants a shot at Adonis Stevenson.

Only Browne's gloves landed, first in the opening round when a right dropped Monaghan. It could have ended then, if not for a low blow. But Browne finished it in the second with a combination at :40 of the round.

"I just took my time and allowed everything to fall into place," said Browne, who really didn't need much time. "I just want to move upwards and onward from here. I want Adonis Stevenson."



Can Conor McGregor (right) really stand up to Floyd Mayweather Jr.?

MAY-MAC: IDRIS ERBA

AUGUST

FLOYD MAYWEATHER JR. VS. CONOR MCGREGOR

Date: August 26
Location: T-Mobile Arena, Las Vegas
Division: Welterweights
RING Ratings: None
TV: Pay-per-view
Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★
Also fighting: Gervonta Davis (No. 5) vs. Roman Martinez, junior lightweights (for Davis' IBF title)
Significance: From a competitive standpoint, this "fight" is a waste of time. Mayweather (49-0, 26 KOs) almost certainly will make the UFC star look like a fool in his boxing debut. McGregor has a puncher's chance at best. From a business standpoint, it's a no-brainer. Mayweather stands to make a few hundred million dollars and McGregor could earn half that, assuming people buy into this nonsense in large numbers.
Prediction: Rosenthal – Mayweather KO 4; Fischer – Mayweather UD; Harty – Mayweather KO 10; Coppinger – Mayweather KO 6

MIGUEL COTTO VS. YOSHIHIRO KAMEGAI

Date: August 26
Location: StubHub Center, Carson, California
Division: Junior middleweights (for vacant WBO title)
RING Ratings: Cotto No. 3
TV: HBO
Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★★
Also fighting: Rey Vargas (No. 3) vs. Ronny Rios, junior featherweights (for Vargas' WBC title).

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Significance: Cotto (40-5, 33 KOs) hasn't fought since he lost his RING middleweight title to Canelo Alvarez in November 2015 and hasn't won since he stopped Daniel Geale more than five months earlier. He's also getting on in years; he'll be 37 in October. However, he probably has more than enough to handle Kamegai (27-3-2, 24 KOs), a tough, but limited opponent.
Prediction: Rosenthal – Cotto KO 9; Fischer – Cotto UD; Harty – Cotto UD; Coppinger – Cotto KO 5

AUGUST 4 – Mauricio Herrera vs. Jesus Soto Karass, welterweights, Indio, Calif. (ESPN); Also, Vyacheslav Shabranskyy vs. Todd Unthank-May, light heavyweights.
AUGUST 4 – Nikki Adler vs. Claressa Shields, super middleweights (for the vacant IBF and Adler's WBC title), Detroit (Showtime).
AUGUST 5 – Vasyl Lomachenko (No. 1, No. 5 P4P) vs. Miguel Marriaga, junior lightweights (for Lomachenko's WBO title), Los Angeles (ESPN); Also, Raymundo Beltran (No. 8) vs. Bryan Vasquez, lightweights.
AUGUST 15 – Shinsuke Yamanaka (C, No. 9 P4P) vs. Luis Nery (No. 7), bantamweights (for Yamanaka's RING and WBC titles), Tokyo (beIN Sports Espanol, delayed).
AUGUST 18 – ALBerto Machado vs. Carlos Morales, junior lightweights, Ponce, Puerto Rico (ESPN/ESPN Deportes).
AUGUST 19 – Terence Crawford (C, No. 4 P4P) vs. Julius Indongo (No. 2), junior welterweights (for Crawford's RING, WBC and WBO; and Indongo's IBF and WBA titles), Lincoln, Neb. (ESPN)
AUGUST 25 – TUReano Johnson vs. Sergiy Derevyanchenko (No. 9), middleweights, Miami, Okla.
AUGUST 27 – Tatsuya Fukuhara (No. 9) vs. Ryuya Yamanaka (No. 8), strawweights (for Fukuhara's WBO title), Kimamoto, Japan.

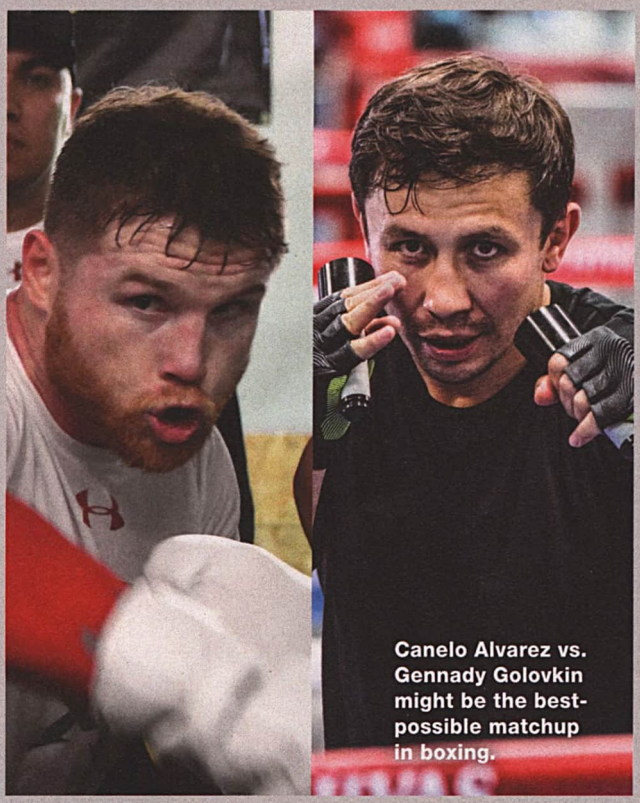
SEPTEMBER

WISAKSIL WANGEK VS. ROMAN GONZALEZ

Date: September 9
Location: StubHub Center, Carson, California
Division: Junior bantamweights (for Wangek's WBC title)
RING Ratings: Wangek No. 2; Gonzalez No. 3, No. 3 P4P
TV: HBO
Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★★★
Also fighting: Naoya Inoue (No. 1, No. 10 P4P) vs. Antonio Nieves, junior bantamweights (for Inoue's WBO title); Carlos Cuadras (No. 4) vs. Juan Estrada (No. 5), junior bantamweights.
Significance: Wangek (aka Srisaket Sor Rungvisai) stunned Gonzalez and the boxing world when he handed the No. 1-ranked fighter in the world his first defeat by a majority decision in March. We'll find out whether that was an aberration or if Gonzalez (46-1, 38 KOs) is not the fighter he was at lower weights. Wangek (43-4-1, 39 KOs) has won 16 consecutive fights – mostly against novice opposition – since he lost a technical decision to Carlos Cuadras in 2014.
Prediction: Rosenthal – Gonzalez UD; Fischer – Gonzalez MD; Harty – Gonzalez UD; Coppinger – Gonzalez UD

CANELO ALVAREZ VS. GENNADY GOLOVKIN

Date: September 16
Location: T-Mobile Arena, Las Vegas
Division: Welterweights (for Canelo's RING and Golovkin's IBF, WBA and WBC titles)
RING Ratings: Alvarez Champion, No. 8 P4P; Golovkin No. 1, No. 2 P4P

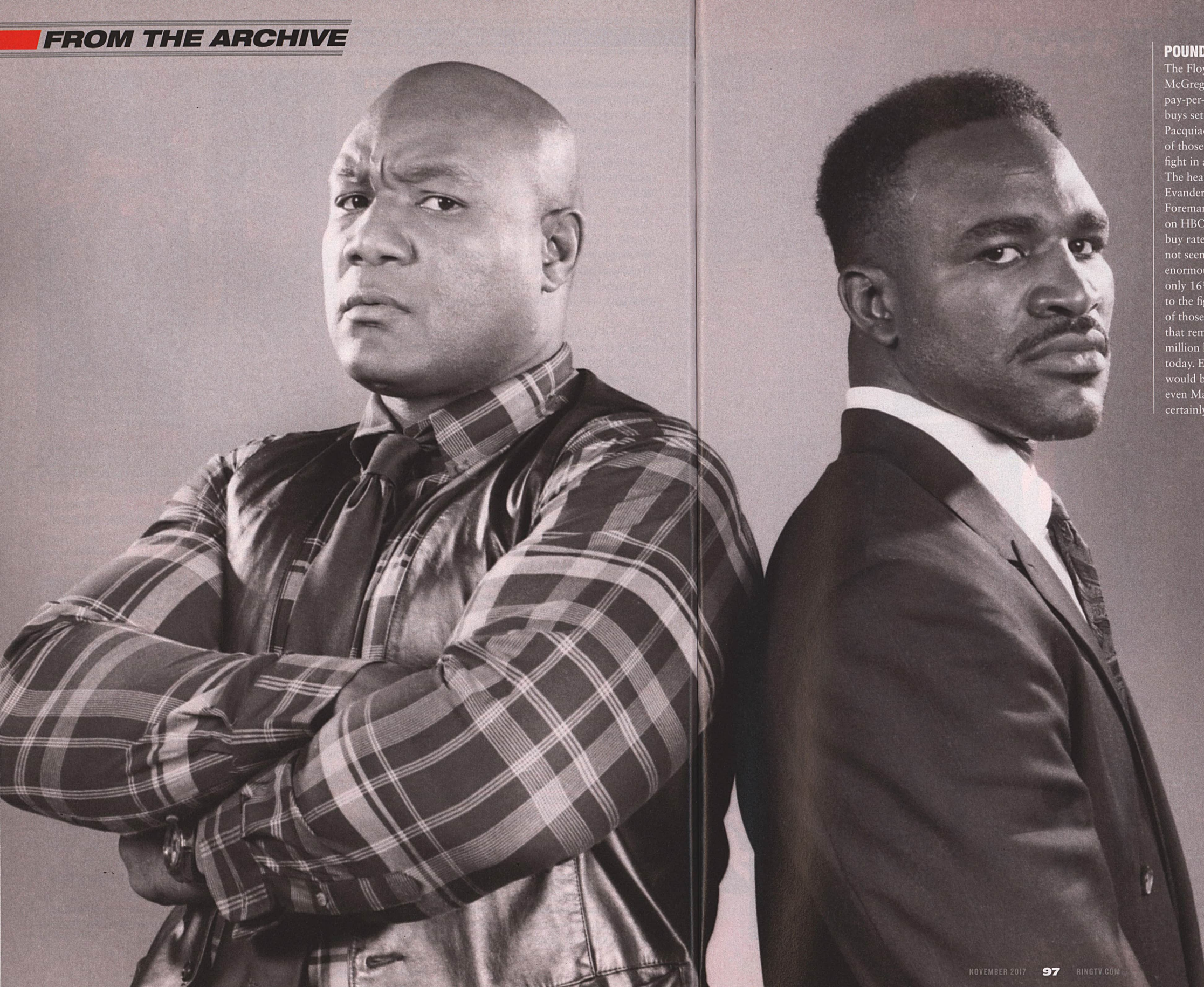


Canelo Alvarez vs. Gennady Golovkin might be the best-possible matchup in boxing.

TV: HBO Pay-Per-View
Watchability rating (up to five stars): ★★★★★
Also fighting: Diego De La Hoya vs. Randy Caballero, junior featherweights; Antonio Orozco vs. Roberto Ortiz, junior welterweight.
Significance: It doesn't get much bigger than this fight, which pits two peak, entertaining middleweights against one another. Golovkin (37-0, 33 KOs) would've been a prohibitive favorite when this fight was first discussed less than two years ago but Canelo (49-1-1, 34 KOs) has developed nicely over the past few years – particularly his defensive skills – and GGG has looked vulnerable in victories over Kell Brook and Daniel Jacobs. Now we have a 50-50 fight.
Prediction: Rosenthal – Golovkin KO 10; Fischer – Golovkin UD; Harty – Golovkin SD; Coppinger – Alvarez SD

SEPTEMBER 13 – Yukinori Oguni (No. 8) vs. Ryosuke Iwasa, junior featherweights (for Oguni's IBF title), Osaka, Japan.
SEPTEMBER 15 – "Golden Boy Boxing on ESPN," TBA (ESPN Deportes).
SEPTEMBER 16 – Milan Melindo (No. 4) vs. Hekkie Budler (No. 9), junior flyweights (for Melindo's IBF title), Cebu City, Philippines.
SEPTEMBER 16 – Billy Joe Saunders (No. 4) vs. Willie Monroe Jr., middleweights (for Saunders' WBO title), London.
SEPTEMBER 22 – Gilberto Ramirez (No. 2) vs. Jesse Hart (No. 10), super middleweights (for Ramirez's WBO title), Tucson, Ariz.
SEPTEMBER 23 – Joseph Parker (No. 6) vs. Hughie Fury, heavyweights (for Parker's WBO title), Manchester, England.
SEPTEMBER 30 – Mairis Briedis (No. 4) vs. Mike Perez, cruiserweights (for Briedis' WBC title, WBSS quarterfinals), Riga, Latvia.
SEPTEMBER 30 – "Golden Boy Boxing on ESPN," TBA (ESPN Deportes).

ALVEREZ: GENE BEVINS; GOLOVKIN: IAN HUGHES



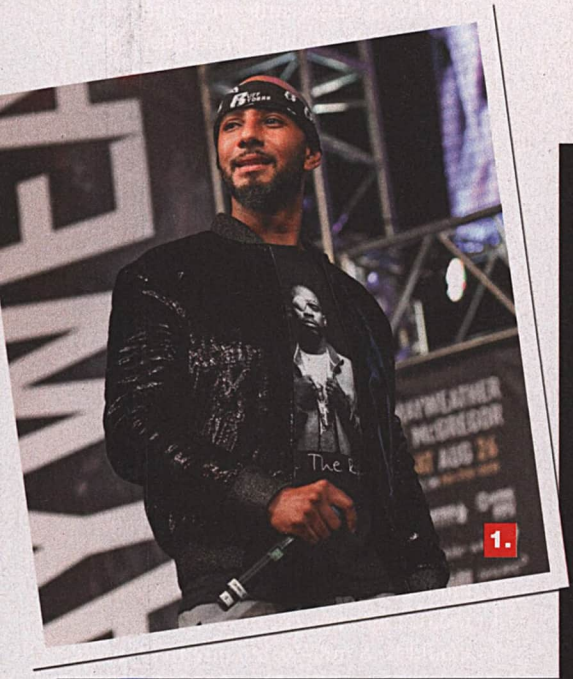
POUND-FOR-POUND NO. 1

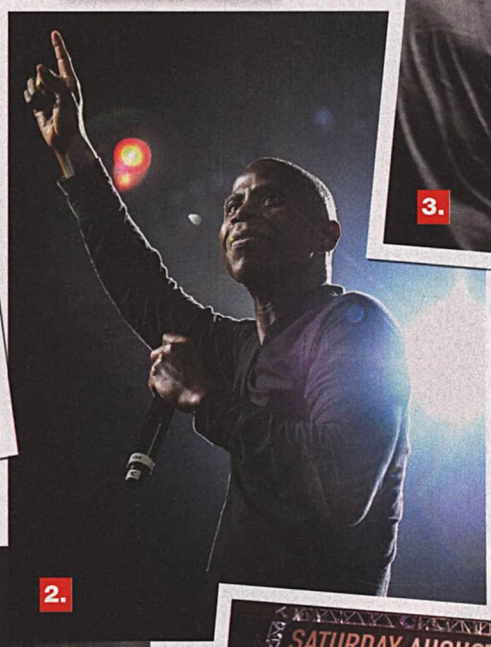
The Floyd Mayweather Jr.-Conor McGregor fight could break the U.S. pay-per-view record of 4.6 million buys set by Mayweather-Manny Pacquiao in May 2015. Neither of those events can touch another fight in a pound-for-pound sense. The heavyweight title fight between Evander Holyfield and George Foreman on April 19, 1991, the first on HBO Pay-Per-View, generated a buy rate of 1.4 million. That might not seem like a big number, but it's enormous when you consider that only 16½ million homes had access to the fight. That means 8 percent of those homes bought it, a buy rate that remains a record. Around 100 million have access to pay-per-view today. Eight percent of that total would be 8 million, a figure that even Mayweather-McGregor almost certainly won't approach. RING

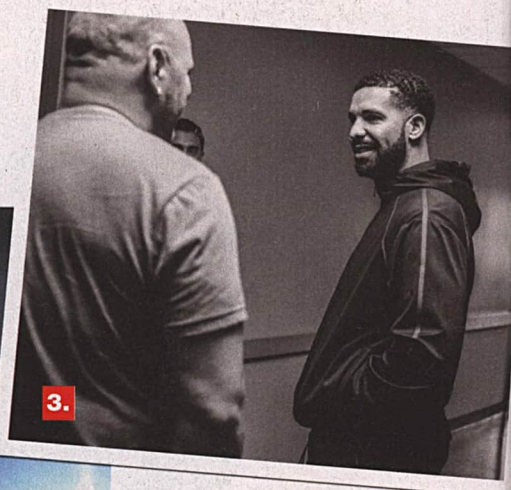
#ATTHEFIGHTS

By **Lamar Clark**

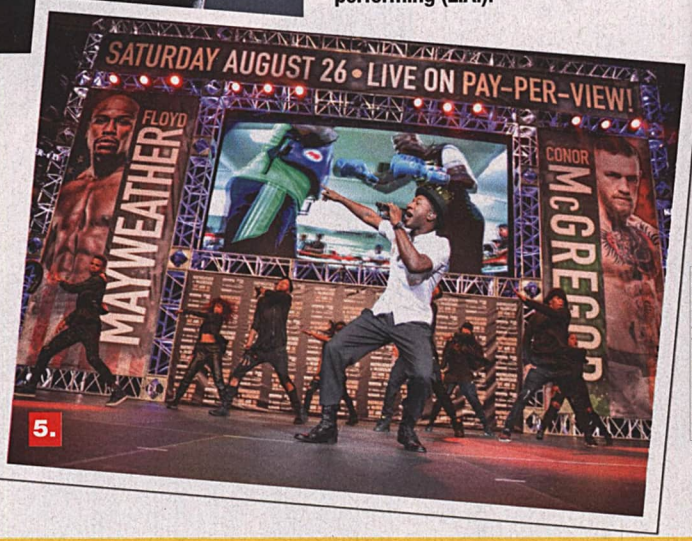
STYLES MAKE FIGHTS







MayMac Tour: 1. Rapper Swiss Beat (NYC); **2.** rapper Doug E. Fresh (NYC); **3.** UFC President Dana White and rapper Drake (Toronto); **4.** actress Rosie Perez and Sirius Radio host Sway (NYC); **5.** R&B singer Aloe Blacc performing (L.A.).



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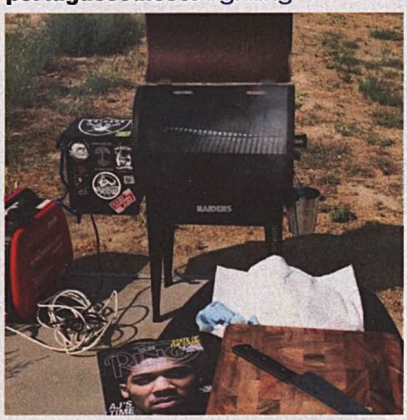

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